



DELHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Cl. No.

0:2J640m ^{J59}~~J59~~ F9

Ac. No.

172949

Date of release for loan

This book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below. An overdue charge of 5 Paise will be collected for each day the book is kept overtime.

SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN AS TOPICAL DRAMATISTS

*Being a further study of Elizabethan
Dramatic Origins and Imitations*

BY
PERCY ALLEN

AUTHOR OF
"SHAKESPEARE, JONSON AND WILKINS AS BORROWERS"



CECIL PALMER
FORTY-NINE
CHANDOS
STREET
W.C.

F I R S T
E D I T I O N
C O P Y -
R I G H T
I 9 2 9

Printed in Great Britain
at the BURLEIGH PRESS, Lewin's Mead, BRISTOL.

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE pages in this book that deal with the historic originals of Ophelia, are based, in part, upon an article that appeared in "The Shakespeare Review," to the Editor of which I express my indebtedness. I have also to thank the Editor of "The Christian Science Monitor," for permission to make use of certain articles, which I wrote for that journal, concerning the literary relations between Chapman and Shakespeare.

Two works have been indispensable to me, in the preparation of this book—namely Dr. T. M. Parrott's scholarly edition of Chapman's Plays, which has piloted me through many classical allusions and imitations ; and Captain B. M. Ward's "Life of the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford," which has been most useful, as affording documented material upon which to base the many remarkable analogies between the life stories of Hamlet, and of Edward de Vere, as set forth in my fourth chapter. To Col. B. R. Ward, C.M.G., as well as to Captain B. M. Ward, my thanks are also due for information concerning the probable origins of "Twelfth Night," and for much other help, encouragement, and good advice.

vi *AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS*

Professor R. P. Cowl kindly read the proof-sheets for me, and made many valuable suggestions and corrections.

Mr. Arthur Acheson's "Shakespeare and the Rival Poet," has also been very useful, in putting me upon the track of literary feuds between Chapman and Shakespeare. To all the gentlemen named, and to others who have aided me, I express my sincere gratitude.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

READING again the page-proofs of this book, before sending them finally to the press, the fact becomes ever more clear to me—and I wish to impress it upon my readers—that Chapman, when working upon those plays in which he deliberately imitated, and criticized, Shakespeare, had certain scenes of the Shakespearean original so photographed, verbally and pictorially, upon his mind, that he was able to, and did, with surprising ingenuity and felicity, transmute, at will, their phraseology and ideas into the service of his own text. Had his style, so full of majestic and massive harmonies, been but a little less rugged and rebellious than it is, I would have added the word “facility” to those qualities which he brings to his peculiar interpretations of Shakespeare. Facile, however, the rival poet never was, not even in those passages of “The Revenge of Bussy” wherein the close analogies between Shakespeare’s metaphysics and his own lend him some vicarious ease. If the above statements above written be accepted—and I do not see how they can be honestly denied—all clearly discernible parallels between kindred passages of the two writers, whether of thought, image, or

vocabulary, even to the vaguest, may, in my judgment, be legitimately evoked towards the establishment of the cases that I have endeavoured to prove.

Further concerning the plagiaristic subtleties, to which these pages call attention, it has been objected that they can hardly be genuine, for the reason that no Elizabethan theatrical audience could have been conscious of them, much less have followed their meticulous intricacies: to which I answer that, granting the justice of such an objection, a similar one can be, and has been, applied to several of the plays, even when considered as a whole, by a critic who was totally unconscious of their bearing upon Shakespearean texts. Swinburne wrote of the Biron tragedies—and, with equal truth, might have written of “*The Revenge of Bussy*”—“Its reappearance at various theatres is all but incredible. The standard of culture and the level of intelligence required in its auditors surpass what we can conceive any theatrical audience to have attained in any modern age.” The conclusion I draw is, that Chapman, from the first, whether for his own day, or with an eye upon posterity, wrote with readers, as much as playgoers, in mind; in which case a charge of improbability aimed at the Shakespearean borrowings at once falls, especially when full account is taken of the inveterate tendency of Elizabethan writers towards subtlety, and concealed second meanings.

Concerning Note 2, page 35, relative to Hakluyt's inclusion of the names Orsino, Sebastian, and Antonio, in his account of the capture of Famagusta, by the Turks, in 1571, it is interesting to observe that the date of W.H.'s introductory "Letter to the Reader" is 1572, the same year as the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, which is a key-year in the planning of "Twelfth Night," while the fact that Famagusta was attacked from the sea connects itself naturally with Antonio, and his "sea-fight 'gainst the count his galleys." Famagusta, moreover, is the setting of Acts two and five of Othello. It seems probable, therefore, that Shakespeare may have drawn the three above-mentioned names, in part, from Hakluyt.

Relative to the introduction of the Hamlet theme into northern Europe, Professor R. P. Cowl kindly sends me the following pertinent and interesting information. The episode of the hero, Kullervo in Kalevala, the great Finnish national epic, is of Scandinavian origin, and found its way to Finland, by way of Estonia, in the twelfth or thirteenth century. The episode of Kullervo occupies six of the fifty runes (containing 22,800 lines) or lays of the Kalevala, and its theme is the Hamlet theme of the born avenger, which ultimately developed itself, some centuries before Shakespeare's birth, in Finnish native tradition poetry.

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>		<i>Page</i>
I.	INTRODUCTORY - , - - - - -	I
II.	THE HISTORIC ORIGINS OF "TWELFTH NIGHT" - - - - -	14
III.	THE PRE-SHAKESPEAREAN ORIGINS OF HAMLET - - - - -	50
IV.	THE HISTORIC ORIGINALS OF SHAKE- SPEARE'S "HAMLET" - - - - -	63
V.	SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN'S "BUSSY D'AMBOIS" (ACTS I-III) - - - - -	99
VI.	"BUSSY D'AMBOIS" (ACTS IV AND V), "MACBETH" AND "HAMLET" - - - - -	168
VII.	"THE REVENGE OF BUSSY D'AMBOIS" AND "HAMLET" - - - - -	202
VIII.	SHAKESPEARE, AND CHAPMAN'S BIRON PLAYS - - - - -	260

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY.

THIS book bearing the title it does, I can hear some of my readers doubting, at once, whether such words can be justified, since the view is still widely held, that Shakespeare's astonishing inventive fertility, and the immense range of his imaginative powers, made it needless for him to draw his material—excepting a skeleton plot—substantially, from other sources than these. The mere idea that many of his characters were taken from actual life, constitutes, to such minds, a slight upon, and even a detraction from, the master's unchallengeable genius.

Such arguments, however—though, as an encomium upon Shakespeare's achievement, honourable to those who hold them—are no longer tenable in the light of modern research, now that discovery after discovery is being made, each tending to shew that Shakespeare, just as he looked closely about him for his plots, sought also to people his plays from among the individuals and events of his own immediate neighbourhood and time ; and, while disguising, distorting, idealizing, or burlesquing them, to his heart's content, as best might suit the mood of the moment—since his work was necessarily hasty—or the dramatic exigencies of the scene—and doing it so marvellously well that not one spectator, in a hundred to-day, realizes that Shakespearean actors are personating historic originals—

2 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

did, nevertheless, contrive to insert within his dialogue clues sufficient, with the help of others supplied, by his rivals or imitators, to enable us to form quite definite opinions concerning the historic identities of some of the most interesting of them all.

In my last book¹ I shewed, conclusively, I hope, how many, and how important, those imitations were, and with what assiduity and zest the Elizabethan dramatists worked upon one another ; Jonson, in particular, making of Shakespearean imitation almost a speciality ; my general conclusion being, that the Elizabethan drama, in a far greater degree than has hitherto been supposed, was the newspaper and debating platform of the day, upon which topical themes, and contemporary celebrities, were discussed, under more or less penetrable disguises, with a freedom that, though probably ignored by the groundlings—who, in the main, would be content with the surface value of the entertainment—was, to the educated and intellectual playgoers of the day, an integral part of the theatre's drawing power and attraction. The value of shrewd topical allusion, I have no doubt whatever, was continuously present to the mind of such dramatists as Shakespeare, Jonson, and Chapman, all of whom, I suppose, would rely, for some of their noblest patronage, upon the double inducement of the play within the play² That is my answer to those critics, who, on the assumption that secret, topical comments would have passed unrecognized upon the stage, have challenged,

¹ "Shakespeare, Jonson and Wilkins as Borrowers" (Cecil Palmer, 1928).

² This argument applies even more strongly to the printed than to the acted play.

for example, the probability of references by Chapman, in the text of his dramas, to certain plays of Shakespeare. Such objections, in my judgment, take insufficient account of the penetrating subtlety of the Elizabethan mind, and afford another instance of the failure of scholarship, hitherto, sufficiently to co-relate English drama with the life of its time. The tendency, unwarranted, though perhaps, natural, is to regard a play of Shakespeare's day much as we do one by Mr. Maugham ; whereas many examples of Elizabethan drama, as I understand it, are much more analagous to a modern revue. "Love's Labour's Lost," in particular was of that kind ; and it would be little exaggeration to say that, as later chapters will endeavour to shew, both "Twelfth Night" and "Hamlet" are topical, to a large degree.

Here I will devote a few pages to answering my critics, who, in most instances, have dealt very kindly, and justly, with my "Shakespeare, Jonson, and Wilkins as Borrowers," though several seemed to regard it as no more than the result of a merely mechanical hunt for verbal plagiarisms ; and have wholly failed to realize its inward implications, or to suspect that it might open windows, through which further light would, probably, be shed upon Elizabethan men and methods.

Towards the close of my last book, I wrote that, while not expecting to carry my readers all the way, in every conclusion and inference, criticism, I thought, would not destroy my proofs of Jonson's borrowings. It has not done so. Several reviewers have earned my sincere gratitude, by kindly pointing out mistakes of

4 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

detail ; but the press, generally, has not attempted—and, when it has attempted, has, in my judgment, signally failed—to shake the main arguments of a study which, with all its faults, may, henceforth, I hope, be allowed substantially to stand. By way of general answer therefore, to a certain type of scornful, though, in my view unenlightened comment, upon my general method of dealing with, and drawing inferences from, these Elizabethan plays, I should like briefly to examine one or two hostile notices, especially that published by *The Manchester Guardian*, whose reviewer cannot possibly object, since, on being mildly remonstrated with, he declined to alter “one syllable,” of what he had written. The review was as follows :—

Our amusement at Mr. Percy Allen’s “Shakespeare, Jonson and Wilkins as Borrowers” is tempered by the reflection that serious students of Shakespeare have greater difficulty than Mr. Allen in getting into print. In time, too, amusement changes to irritation, as one realizes that the author is not burlesquing the literary source-hunters, but playing their game in dead earnest. His book is curiously prefaced by R. P. Cowl (who should have known better since he must at least have heard of Granville Barker) as the first attempt to be made by a dramatic critic to solve problems usually falling to Shakesperean scholars. It collects verbal echoes ; it is ludicrously generous in recognizing an echo, and wildly prodigal in formulating conclusions thereon. To cite isolated cases is always held to be unfair to a method which relies on cumulative effect. But what—beyond the fact that detested and desolate both begin with a “de”—can be safely concluded

the circumstance that there is a "barren
valley" in "Titus Andronicus," and a
"barren heath" in "King Lear." Malvolio
wears a chain, the chain of office of a steward or
gentleman-usher; a person in one of Jonson's
plays is advised to hire a fellow with a chain, and
that, we are asked to suppose, does not simply
mean that the man is recommended to hire a
steward—it means that Jonson is imitating
"Twelfth Night." As a corroboration it is noted
that 'Elisium' is mentioned in both plays. It
is not noted, however, that the expression is a
common one—that it has quite different application
in the two instances, and that the point of the use
in each case turns on this difference. This is the
ecstasy of criticism.

It is surely not too much to ask that,
before writing, and finally committing himself to
an attack of that kind, its composer should,
from the first, produce evidence of his capacity to
dig at least a yard below my mine, before he
endeavours to blow me to the moon. This
writer, therefore, was, I think, a little rash in
raising, almost from the start, strong doubt
concerning his knowledge of matters theatrical,
when he supposes, apparently, that Mr. Gran-
ville Barker was, or is, a dramatic critic, in the
ordinarily accepted professional meaning of that
term. There follows a manifest example of
unfairness, when—after deprecating the citation
of isolated instances, in disproof of a case which
largely depends, for proof and cogency, upon
cumulative effect—my critic straightway pro-
ceeds, in his reference to Malvolio, quoted above,
to commit that very fault, when he fails to inform
his readers that, throughout 104 pages of my book

6 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

I cite dozens of closely co-related instances from "Every Man Out Of His Humour," and from "The Silent Woman," shewing, with reiterated insistence, the obvious fact that, throughout these two plays, Jonson has "Twelfth Night" vividly in mind. That much granted, however, my suggestion that references to "a fellow with a chain," and to "Elisium"—both of which are cited against me, as examples of my "ludicrous generosity in recognizing an echo"—may be reminders of "Twelfth Night," becomes, not merely legitimate, but, in the circumstances, intellectually necessary; since, when one sees finger-post after finger-post, in the shape of multitudinous analogies, not of phrase merely, but also of situation, character, and idea, all pointing, with monotonous regularity, in the same direction—and when one knows, moreover, that this same dramatist, in an earlier comedy,¹ has openly expressed, and gloried in, an intention deliberately to "play all his play before him"—what else can an honest, and open-minded, enquirer do, but follow so significant a lead. I readily admit, of course, that such resemblances and analogies do not possess equal evidential value; that many of them appear weak, or even trivial, when removed from their context, but after eliminating, if you please, some of the weakest, the remaining mass of them, strong and weak together, still make, to my thinking, an unanswerable case; so that, when—turning, for a moment, to another of my critics, Mr. Ivor Brown, in *The Saturday Review*—I am warned against supposing that

¹ "Cynthia's Revels," Act v.

if you pile up a quantity of bad reasons for believing a thing you make one good reason. The value of evidence is surely a matter of quality not of quantity—

I answer that, even though all my reasons were bad—which, indubitably, they are not—the value of evidence, in work such as this, must be determined, in part, at least, by quantity—a number of probable borrowings, when allied with a number of almost, or positively, certain ones, contributing, beyond question, to the general cumulative effect.

Returning now to the *Manchester Guardian's* attack upon my Malvolio allusions, my critic, when he wrote the lines above quoted in revue, was probably unaware—and it is no part of my duty to warn my opponents of undisclosed and corroborating knowledge which I may possess—that when Jonson's friend, Chapman, in his turn imitates "Twelfth Night," in the first three acts of "Bussy D'Ambois," he also aims, several times, at Malvolio—a character which the austere Chapman seems honestly to have admired—referring openly, just as Jonson does, to "your chain and velvet jacket."¹

Let me now examine, for a moment, another passage, from the same review, which seems to me to be interesting, as affording an example of my critic's complete failure to penetrate into the spirit of the book that he is attacking, or into that of the period with which it is concerned. The passage runs :

What beyond the fact that detested and desolate both begin with a 'de' can be safely concluded

¹ See post, Chapter II, pp. 40-41.

8 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

from the circumstance that there is a "barren detested vale" in "Titus Andronicus" and "a desolate heath" in King Lear?

Nothing, I agree, can with absolute certainty be concluded; but, in the light of the analogies that I adduced between the two plays, Shakespeare, probably, had the first in mind, when writing the second, and—granted so much—has not my critic imagination enough to perceive the relation that, to a mind so flexible, and so fanciful as Shakespeare's, can exist, imaginatively, between a "detested vale" and a "desolate heath"? If the answer is to be a negative one; and my reviewer's demand is that a plagiarism, to be recognizable as such, must always be literal, and obvious; then I suggest, very respectfully, that he would do well to leave books of this kind to someone more imaginatively sympathetic than himself. The Elizabethan mind was a subtle and tortuous one; and it loved to work in subterranean ways, where it can be followed by the aid of sympathetic imagination. As a sagacious critic of my book, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, was astute enough to observe, when commenting upon my allusions to that same play "Titus": "Here we are over the frontier beyond literary scholarship . . . the rest is really a matter for psychologists to take up," Those words bring us near to the root of the matter. Studies of this kind are not done—as another reviewer seems, honestly, to have believed—by incessant poring over a Shakespearean Concordance—a work which, in fact, I did not possess, and referred to not more than three times, while writing the book in question. Imagination, and a knowledge of the period, are as imperatively

needed for the reviewing as for the writing of books such as these.

Turning now to another point, certain of my critics seem to suppose that the parallels I adduce can be substantially accounted for by one word, "coincidence." Mr. Ivor Brown, in *The Saturday Review*, writes :—"Give me time enough and I can prove, by duly professorial methods of detection, that any play you choose to mention was written by Francis Bacon, Sam. Rowley, John Webster, etc."

Well, I choose to mention "Every Man in His Humour," and I suggest not that Mr. Brown should endeavour to prove that it was written by another than Jonson, but that he should endeavour to write an essay connecting that play with "Twelfth Night," in the same way that I have connected "Twelfth Night" with "Every Man Out of His Humour," and see whether, "by duly professorial methods," he can obtain a similarly logical and coherent result. And of my critics generally, who have asserted, or have implied, that the analogies which I have pointed out, between certain other plays, are no more than mere chance coincidences, I would ask certain explanations—why it is, for example, that these multitudinous resemblances to "Twelfth Night" occur in "Every Man Out of His Humour," and in "The Silent Woman," but not in "Every Man in His Humour," or in "The Alchemist"; why references to "Julius Cæsar" teem in "Sejanus," and—as I can prove—in "Catiline" also, but not in Jonson's other plays; why very many analogies with "Twelfth Night" are to be found in "Bussy D'Ambois," but not in "The Revenge of Bussy"; why the

"Revenge of Bussy" is one long echo of "Hamlet," whereas the Biron plays have little bearing upon that tragedy ; and lastly, why the last act of "Biron's Tragedy" is palpably concerned with "Richard II," while "Biron's Conspiracy" is not?—whereas, if the coincidence theory be sound, I should expect to find the parallels scattered indiscriminately throughout all the plays ; which is certainly not the case. I have been accused, by more than one critic, of a fantastic sense of evidence ; but which, I ask, is the more fantastic—the detection, in all these repeated echoes, of nothing more than mere coincidence, and the deduction that my first book, and now this second one, after it, is built up upon basic fallacies ; or acceptance of my own simple, and logical, conclusion, which is that Shakespeare's two greatest literary rivals, Jonson and Chapman, for perfectly comprehensible reasons, deliberately, in their plays, imitated, criticized, and commented upon the master, of whose success they were jealous ; and that they began to do so more boldly, and more openly, about the middle of the first decade of the seventeenth century, when Shakespeare's life-work was either ended, or was drawing towards a close. Cannot my severer critics, moreover, perceive, that, by denying any relation of my arguments to actual historic fact, they are crediting me, though unwittingly, with a degree of perversely inventive ingenuity, to which I make no claim, which I do not, in fact, possess, and which, did it exist, would make, of these two volumes, one of the most astonishing collections of literary coincidences that the world-of-letters has yet seen ? My opponents cannot have it both ways ; it is

not open to them at once to deny merit to my arguments, and more than ordinary chance to the "coincidences."

"Arguments about authorship and sources," continues a critic, "conducted on evidence of this kind are, to put it mildly, dangerous. . . . I did and do dispute the use of similarities of phrase such as Mr. Allen cites, to prove borrowings, derivations, and theft. My point was and is that once literary argument accepts this specimen of testimony, it can only plunge itself into chaos."

Indeed ! To what, may I ask, and to whom are my arguments dangerous ? To one or two individuals, perhaps, whether critics or editors, facts discerned, and the conclusions arrived at, in these books, may, possibly, be a trifle disconcerting ; and their author must himself face the dangers from which no pioneer work, whether literary or other, is exempt ; but these, I take it, were not the perils that my opponent had in mind. He feared, I gather, for something much greater than any merely personal self-conceit or reputation—he feared, honestly, for the truth concerning Shakespeare, and his fellows. He need not fear. Here, once more, I join issue with him.

Do my opponents really suppose, and are they prepared to assert, that we know, already, all that is to be known about the Elizabethans ; and that further rummaging among the texts is, for that reason, waste of time ? Do they refuse to recognize the fact, that Shakespeare, and his contemporaries with him, had an ineradicable habit of saying secretly in their texts, things that they would not, or could not, say openly in the

market place; that Shakespeare's sonnets, for example, and Chapman's poems alike, teem with personal and topical allusions, the meaning and significance of which have never yet been fully comprehended, nor explained? I assert, with conviction—and, I suggest, with the great mass of up-to-date Elizabethan scholarship behind me—that this is so. If, then, I am to be denied "the use of similarities of phrase," such as I cite, "to prove borrowings, derivations and thefts," as being illegitimate methods of literary argument and research, will Mr. Brown, or anyone else, inform me what is the alternative, and legitimate, method, which I may be graciously permitted to adopt? and will someone explain to me precisely how the truth of the matter is to be thrashed out, without the collation of texts?

When once our literary argument accepts this species of testimony, it can only plunge itself into chaos.

But can it? If my opponents will honour me with a careful reading of this book—which follows precisely the same methods that I used in writing the earlier one—they will have opportunity to test the truth of the above assertion; and to determine whether or no that sum-total of 516 pages does, or does not cohere; and whether its tenour and direction be, in the matter of Elizabethan knowledge, more towards a chaos, than towards a cosmos. The main object of "Shakespeare, Jonson and Wilkins as Borrowers" was to shew that Jonson plagiarized systematically from Shakespeare; and commented, in doing so, upon his texts; the aim of this present volume is to prove that Jonson's

friend, Chapman, did after his fashion, precisely the same thing ; and further to demonstrate to my readers, that Shakespeare was, in the full sense of these words, a topical dramatist, basing play after play, in succession, upon allied groups of prominent contemporary historical characters, of England and of France, whom he had met, or read, or been told of, in and about the court of London.

No chapter, theory, or principle, of either book, clashes with, or contradicts, so far as I am aware, any other chapter, theory, or principle ; and I respectfully suggest, to my opponents, that, had my basic ideas been as fallacious as they assert, collision and conflict would have been everywhere apparent. Lastly, may I add, that I make this defence in no aggressive spirit, nor with any sense of antagonism, other than literary, to many whose attainments, I fully recognize, are greater than my own. I claim no pontifical infallibility. My last book, I admit, contained several errors of detail, which I would now gladly amend ; and I cannot suppose that this work either is altogether immune ; but I hope, and believe, that, in common with several other works, that have recently appeared—as, for example, Captain Ward's " *Life of the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*," and Sir Denis Bray's edition of the sonnets, set in their rhyme-linked order—this little book will help to open gates to the understanding of Elizabethan men-of-letters, and their methods, which will never again be closed.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORIC ORIGINS OF "TWELFTH NIGHT."

Endeavours to show, from clues supplied by Chapman's play, "Bussy D'Ambois," which imitates, and comments upon "Twelfth Night," that Shakespeare's comedy is based upon the Alençon courtship; and that its principal characters, including Queen Elizabeth as Olivia, and Alençon as Orsino, are based upon historic originals, both French and English, present at the court of London, before, during and after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572.

EVERY student of Elizabethan drama knows that the possible sources are many, from which Shakespeare may have drawn, in part, his plot, and material, for "Twelfth Night." A principal one, according to Sir Edmund Chambers, was Barnabe Riche's "History of Apolonius and Silla," in his "Farewell to the Military Profession"; two sixteenth century Italian plays, "Gl'Inganni," contain incidents recalling Shakespeare's comedy; and a third play, "Gl'Ingannati," offers even closer resemblances, including the name Malevolti in its introduction.¹ Further, Belleforest, in his "Histoires Tragiques" (IV. 7), taken from Bandello's Novelli, may also have contributed something to the story's general framework; and, lastly, in my book, "Shakespeare, Jonson and Wilkins as Borrowers," I have argued that the first-named very probably borrowed ideas, for the Orsino-Olivia-Viola scenes of "Twelfth Night," from the Silvius-Phœbe-

¹ Sir I. Gollanez. Intro. to "Twelfth Night." Temple Shakespeare.

Rosalind scenes, which constitute the secondary plot of "As You Like It."¹

These sources, between them, may all have contributed something to the shaping, or to the dialogue of Shakespeare's play; but it is being increasingly recognized to-day that he often, if not habitually, drew his principal characters from contemporaries who were large in the public eye—the Earl of Essex, as we shall see,² standing, probably, in part, for Richard II, and the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, unquestionably, for Hamlet.³ For some years past, therefore, I have thought it more than probable that the principal characters of his most popular, and most widely imitated comedy, "Twelfth Night," would emerge recognizably, ere long, from their historical background, and that the delectable land of Illyria, far away, by the ring of its name, in the realms of Fancy, would be discovered, at last, like Denmark and Elsinore, to be no further away than England's capital; as, indeed, Shakespeare himself broadly hints, by the mouth of Antonio—

In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,⁴ is best to lodge.

At a time when the problem was strongly present to my mind, the first real clue came to me, as such small discoveries often do, in an altogether unexpected manner. Having interested myself, desultorily for some few weeks, in the plays of George Chapman—though without having any idea of the directions in which a

¹ I think it probable that certain ideas from "Love's Labour's Lost," especially from II, 1., e.g., "No woman may approach his silent court" were transmuted for use in T.N.

² Cap. viii., pp. 269-71.

³ Cap. iv.

⁴ i.e., The Elephant and Castle, in South London.

study of those somewhat tedious dramas might lead me—I had perceived, not only that Chapman often imitated Shakespeare, but also that, while in process of doing so, he seemed, almost habitually, to drop clues to the identification of the Shakespearean characters whom he had then in mind, and with the originals of whom, in all probability, he was personally acquainted. When, therefore, I observed that the opening scenes of “Bussy D’Ambois” were, undeniably, imitated, in the main, from “Twelfth Night,” I naturally kept a close look-out for any clue that might help me—and had not long to wait; for, with the first entry, in act one, scene two, of Henry, Guise, Montsurry, and others, followed by Henry’s opening speech—

Duchess of Guise, your grace is much enrich’d
In the attendance of that English virgin—

and then again by many references to, and comparisons between, the English and French courts—all further followed, as they had also been preceded, by obvious borrowings from “Twelfth Night”—I began, at once, to suspect that there must have existed some definite contemporary connection, in the minds of Chapman and Shakespeare alike, between the courts of the virgin queen in England, and of the virgin countess in Illyria, or its adjacent territories; while the connection of Chapman’s scenes with the French court further suggested to me that Orsino might be, historically, a Frenchman; and, if so, most probably, one of the many suitors for Elizabeth’s hand. But which one? Upon the entry of Monsieur, with D’Ambois, followed by the former’s lines—

Come, mine own sweetheart, I will enter thee.

Sir, I have brought a gentleman to Court—

coming, as they do, at the heels of such lines as Henry's

That's a court indeed,

Not mixt with clowneries—

all of them reminiscent, the last satirically so, of "Twelfth Night"—I first began to see revealing rays athwart the darkness, the passage at once suggesting to me that this "Prince," who had "brought a gentleman to the (French) court" might supply the key to my enquiry; seeing that he was none other than François, Duke of Alençon, and later of Anjou, youngest son of Catherine de Medicis, and an ardent suitor for the hand of Queen Elizabeth; and that, as next younger brother of the King of France, he bore by ancient custom, the familiar title of Monsieur, the letters of which, shorn of their capital "M," give the name "Orsineu," which, more particularly when pronounced in the French manner, is not far from that of Illyria's Duke. The additional fact, pointed out by Dr. Parrott, in his scholarly edition of Chapman's play,¹ that the presentation of Bussy, as a poor gentleman brought to court by Monsieur's favour, was quite unhistorical, confirmed my opinion that Chapman introduced the incident in conscious imitation of Viola's coming to Orsino's court.

From that moment I became almost certain that Olivia's court was that of London; that Olivia was Queen Elizabeth, that Orsino was Alençon; and that Viola, probably, and, perhaps,

¹ Dr. Parrott, nevertheless, had not detected the analogy with T.N.

other characters of Shakespeare's comedy also, might be identified among the French courtiers of the time ; in which connection I read the following couplet as a hint, deliberately dropped by their creator, concerning the nationalities of Sir Andrew and Viola (*T.N.*, iii. 1)—

SIR A. Dieu vous garde, Monsieur.

VIOLA. Et vous aussi, votre serviteur.

another hint being the phrase in which Orsino, in v. 1., when upbraiding Olivia, speaks of Viola as

This your minion, whom I know you love— .

the mignons being the name given to the fantastic exquisites of the French court of Henry III, whose hands, upon the slightest pretexts, were upon their sword-hilts, and who were as childishly swift and unreasonable in reconciliation as in quarrel.

Orsino, however, though probably deriving, in the main, from Alençon, may be based, in part, upon his brother, Henry, who, during the reign of Charles IX—the eldest of the three sons of Catherine de Medicis—was, in his turn, for a time, Monsieur, and concerning whom there was also question, in 1571, of marriage with Queen Elizabeth ; my chief reason for making that prince also a part progenitor of Orsino being, that Anjou, more nearly than Alençon, approaches, in temperament and character, the languorous duke as Shakespeare conceived him.¹ Michaeli, a Venetian envoy, describes him thus² :

¹ I think that, for several reasons, there is a hint, in Orsino, of the 17th Earl of Oxford also.

² Baschet, *La Diplomatie Vénitienne*, La Ferrière, quoted Hume's "Courtships of Queen Elizabeth," pp. 120-21.

He is completely dominated by voluptuousness ; covered with perfumes and essences. He wears a double row of rings, and pendants at his ears, and spends vast sums on shirts and clothes. He charms and beguiles women by lavishing upon them the most costly jewels and toys.

All this fits closely Orsino whose love of perfumes coming out sensibly in the lines (*T.N.*, i. 1) :

Away before me to sweet beds of flowers :

Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers while his penchant for endeavouring to beguile great ladies, with costly gifts, is apparent in "Twelfth Night," ii. 4—

Give her this jewel ; say

My love can give no place, bide no deny.

The following passage also, from the *Mémoires* of the French Catholic courtier, Nevers, seems to be so permeated by the atmosphere of the Orsino-Olivia scenes of "Twelfth Night," that one cannot but ask oneself whether Shakespeare when writing them, had not the words beneath his eye :—

It is his misfortune that his portraits do not do him justice. Janet himself has not succeeded in depicting that certain something which nature has given him. His eyes, that gracious turn of the mouth when he speaks, that sweetness which wins over all who approach him, cannot be reproduced by pen or pencil. His hand is so beautiful that if it were turned it could not be more perfectly modelled. Do not ask me whether he has inspired the passion of love ? He has conquered wherever he has cast his eyes, and yet is ignorant of one hundredth part of his conquests. . . .

20 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

If the Queen, your mistress, be not satisfied with so worthy a person she will never marry. Henceforward the only thing for her to do is to vow perpetual celibacy.¹

Very much of this, even to the vow of perpetual celibacy—

But like a cloistress will she veiled walk (*T.N.*, i. 1)—and also the phrase, “which nature hath given her,” comparable with “That nature pranks her in” (*T.N.*, ii. 4), seems equally to echo “Twelfth Night.”

Throughout these grotesque, I-would-and-I-would-not marriage negotiations, between Elizabeth and Alençon, which continued from 1572 to 1583—a term of about eleven years, until the Duke’s death brought the curtain down, at last, upon the longest, and most eventful comedy-intrigue, of its kind, in all the history of England—the parallels with “Twelfth Night,” of character, situation, incident, and even of language, are as close as they are interesting; but, before setting them out in detail, we had best pause, for a moment, to consider whether there is any inherent improbability in the adoption, by Shakespeare, in 1598, as his comedy’s real, though concealed, motive, of actual historic events which happened during his boyhood, approximately from his eighth to his nineteenth year.

The answer, it seems, must be, that such a choice of subject can be easily, and rationally, accounted for by the fact that the courtships of Queen Elizabeth—though, for the purpose of our argument, not commencing until 1572, the year of the St. Bartholomew massacre—did not

¹ Quoted Hume’s “Courtships of Queen Elizabeth,” p. 121.

end there, but continued through the eighties, with Raleigh as prime favourite, until 1587, when Leicester's youthful stepson, Robert, Earl of Essex, nineteen years old, begins to arouse, in the heart of a sovereign 33 years his senior, an affection as deep as any that a self-love so profound could make place for. The courtships of this great queen, therefore, and especially this question of an English, as against a French, marriage—with all that arose out of it concerning the maintenance of established Protestantism—was still, even in the mid-nineties, a matter of intensely vital interest to England, and, therefore, to Shakespeare, as England's most loyal, and most national dramatist, and as Essex's ally, right up to, and beyond, the turn of the century—a fact that becomes still more apparent when it is remembered that this brilliant young earl of Essex, whom Shakespeare as I shall endeavour to shew in a later chapter, had, it seems, already made the hero of one of his most intensely lyrical early plays, "Richard II," written about 1593—is kinsman to, and intimate friend of, another friend and supporter of Shakespeare, namely Southampton. There is, therefore, nothing inherently improbable in the supposition that Shakespeare—though he dared not, and did not, directly stage the courtship of Queen Elizabeth by Essex—did write, and, perhaps, played, before audiences in part alive to its contemporary topical allusions, in a comedy based upon the Queen's early philanderings with Alençon, to the full historic details of which his easy intercourse with Southampton, Oxford, and other great lords, had given him free access.

These conclusions bring us to another point,

22 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

vital to a proper understanding of the origins of "Twelfth Night," namely the question of date. I have shewn, in my last book,¹ that, since Jonson imitated "Twelfth Night," in "Every Man Out of His Humour," the first named play must have been the earlier, and cannot have been written after 1599, which was the approximate date that I then assigned to it. Recently, however, I have seen reason to assign a much earlier date to the first version of "Twelfth Night," my argument being based upon the assumption that, as Sir Edmund Chambers has pointed out, Shakespeare may have got ideas for its plot from Barnabe Riche's "History of Apolonius and Silla," in which its author wrote as follows :

Gentle reader, now thou hast perused these histories to the ende, I doubt not but thou wilt deeme of them as they worthily deserve, and thinke suche vanities much fitter to bee presented on a stage (as some of them have been) then to be published in print.²

If, therefore, it could be proved that the "History of Apolonius and Silla" had already been "presented on a stage," when Riche wrote his book, we should know that a play upon a theme very close to the "Twelfth Night" story had been produced before 1581, a possibility that is heightened when we remember Shakespeare's strong addiction to the use of stories the dramatic possibilities of which have already been theatrically proved ; and when we recall other topical indications in the play, all pointing towards a date prior to the one conventionally adopted.

¹ "Shakespeare, Jonson and Wilkins as Borrowers," cap. iv.

² See Col. B. R. Ward's "New Light on Twelfth Night."

When Sir Andrew, for instance, exclaims (iii. 2), "I had as lief be a Brownist as a politician," his reference is to Robert Browne, who was excommunicated in 1586, the movement having begun some years earlier, just at the time when an early version of "Twelfth Night" might have been written.

Another interesting topical allusion, from the same scene of the play (iii. 2) that contains the reference to the Brownists, is Maria's comparison between the lines of laughter upon Malvolio's face, and those upon the "new map with the augmentation of the Indies." This new map, the "*Additamentum Theatri Orbis Terrarum*," is the second in the Atlas published in 1579, by Abraham Ortelius,¹ supplementary to the famous one, "*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*," published in 1570, and is correctly described as a map, not a chart with rhumb-lines, which would not have looked like a smiling face. Col. B. R. Ward thinks that Maria derived her simile from its mass of curling rivers; but I can find the picture more easily in the waves of the sea, curling up, like dimpling smiles, with the strong coastal indentations of Jamaica, Cuba, and the other islands, shewing, almost, like teeth in a mouth. Such treatment of the sea is the more striking, in this particular map, because in none of the others are the waves thus treated. However that may be, it seems possible that this Atlas, of 1579, may point to some year in the early eighties, as the date of a first version of "Twelfth Night,"² the

¹ It is in the British Museum Maps Catalogue, C.2, C.12.

² John Lyly's play, "*Sapho and Phao*," probably begun in 1581, is also, as Mr. R. W. Bond recognizes, an allegorical comedy upon the relation between Elizabeth and Alençon. It has many textual analogies with "Twelfth Night"; and there may be some connection between the two comedies.

24 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

comedy being, perhaps, originally, a propagandist play, in the form of a court masque, favouring the Alençon marriage.

Having thus advanced a number of reasons—and there are many others to follow—shewing the possibility that the first version of “Twelfth Night” was written at a date earlier, and nearer to its historic theme, than has been supposed hitherto, we will now return to our interrupted identification, in history, of some of its more prominent characters. Orsino, as we have already seen, is probably Alençon-Anjou; the Countess Olivia is Queen Elizabeth; and already my readers may be asking who, in my judgment, stood for the third of that fascinating trio. The answer is a simple one; and can be best given by quoting here, in full, from the Spanish Calendar (Hist. MSS. Comm. p. 403) an unsigned Letter of Intelligence written from London, on August 7, 1572, to the Duke of Alba, Governor of the Netherlands; with an editorial note thereon by Mr. Martin S. Hume.

On the 27th ultimo a young French gentleman named M. de la Môle arrived from the French court with letters from the King. He came post with great speed, and only took four days¹ in coming from Paris to London. . . . La Môle is very friendly with the Duke of Alençon, and, as soon as he arrived, the French ambassador here announced that he had come to visit the Queen from the Duke, as it is not wished that it shall be known that he came from the King. That was the reason they chose such a lad for the mission.

¹ DUKE: “To her in haste; give her this jewel; say
My love can give no place, bide no denay.”
T.N., ii. 4.

. . . On Sunday the 3rd he was taken to the palace very secretly at night when all the people had retired, and was introduced into a private chamber when he conferred with the Queen in the presence of the Earl of Leicester, the ambassador and Secretary Smith. . . . La Môle gave the Queen an autograph letter of credence from the King . . . and when the Queen had read it she was full of graciousness and caresses, and he then proceeded to state his mission. . . . On Monday the fourth M. de la Môle went very bravely to the palace, and was received in state by the Queen and all the lords as an envoy who had come to salute her from Alençon, with all the usual tricks and ceremonies of the French and these people.

Mr. Hume's note runs thus :—

It is somewhat curious that most of the unofficial writers of letters of about this date appear to have had no inkling that the real suitor for the Queen's hand at the time was the Duke of Alençon. The published correspondence of La Mothe Fénelon, the French ambassador, shews that the principal object of La Môle's visit was to persuade the Queen of his young master's affection for her.

Now even a superficial reading of the above letter, with its significant editorial note—"The principal object of La Môle's visit was to persuade the Queen of his young master's affection for her"—a pronouncement made doubly striking by its editor's complete unconsciousness of the analogies that I am pointing out—reveals it as strangely close to the embassy of Viola, disguised as a boy, even to the "autograph letter of credence," so compelling in quality that "when the Queen had read it, she was full of graciousness

26 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

and caresses, and he then proceeded to state his mission."

Further, we read in "The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth" (p. 163)

At this and subsequent interviews at Kenilworth she (Elizabeth) exerted all her powers of fascination upon La Môle and La Mothe who were both ready enough to flatter her to the top of their bent. She played her spinet to them,¹ sighed that she was determined to marry, and must see the Duke at once, and *persistently set her cap at young La Môle* as proxy for his master.²

Here, and especially in the italicized words, the relations between Viola and Olivia are historically duplicated; and it is now time to point out that—as the reader may have already observed—La Môle's name, with a V substituted for the M, can be transformed into Veolla, as easily as Monsieur's name, also without an M, becomes Orsineu; and that Veolla is, almost exactly, the French pronunciation of Viola.

It seems, then, almost certain that we have successfully identified the historic originals of these three characters, Orsino, Olivia, and Viola; and there is, I think, further confirmation to be found in the diplomatic correspondence of La Mothe Fénelon (t. iv. p. 355), where that ambassador records a duologue between Cecil and Elizabeth, concerning the proposed marriage with Alençon, which curiously resembles that between Orsino and Viola, in "Twelfth Night," ii. 4.

¹ Always a mark of Elizabeth's special favour.

² Italics mine.

QUEEN. The disproportion of age is too great.
What height, exactly, is the Duke of Alençon ?

CECIL. About my height.

QUEEN. Your grandson's height, you mean.
This is the corresponding passage in "Twelfth Night."

DUKE. Thine eye
Hath stayed upon some favour that it loves,
Hath it not, boy ?

VIOL. A little, by your favour.

DUKE. What kind of woman is't ?

VIOL. Of your complexion.

DUKE. She is not worth thee, then. What years, i'faith.

VIOL. About your years, my lord.

DUKE. Too old, by heaven.

The parallels between these two passages become even more striking when we recall the fact, clearly set forth in the Foreign Calendar, that although the Queen's official objection to Alençon is on the score of his youth, she seems, in fact, to have been at least as much alienated from him by his smallpox-pitted face.

La Môle arrived in London on July 27, 1572, and a month later, on August 27, returned to London again from Kenilworth, bringing with him, much as Viola did, though more openly, "great professions of love and affection, and a gold chain worth 500 ducats,"¹ this last paralleled in "Twelfth Night," i. 5 by Olivia's

I thank you for your pains, spend this for me—

¹ Unsigned Letter of Intelligence from London to the Duke of Alva, Sept. 8, 1572.

as also by the ring sent after the messenger, and by all Olivia's love-lines, to the end of the scene, with which every reader will be familiar.

At this point in my investigation, however, I was halted by a query which arose naturally out of the circumstances of the case. It will be remembered that when Viola visited Olivia, she found that lady, and her court, in mourning for

A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
And lasting in her sad remembrance—

whereupon, I argued that if my analogies were sound, the English court should have been in mourning at the time of La Môle's embassy. This, however, was not so, for on the occasion of the young Frenchman's first visit, all was normal in the region of Whitehall ; and I feared that my case had here broken down, upon an important point, until I observed that, on August 27, the day upon which La Môle returned to London, there arrived at Rye two couriers from Paris, one of whom bore to England the first, and terrifying, news of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—an event which naturally appeared, to Protestant Englishmen, in the guise of a direct challenge, and almost of a deliberate attack. Immediately all rejoicing throughout the country came to an end ; the court went into deep mourning, the government into anxious council, and, the tide of popularity having turned definitely against the French, La Môle hastened home. When, on September 7, the Queen, on her way to Windsor, received La Mothe, the French ambassador, at Woodstock, she and her court were in deep mourning, for the love, not of one "dead brother," but of many hundreds of

brother, and sister, Protestants, foully slain across the Channel.¹ In arraying Olivia, and her ladies, in black, at the opening of his play, Shakespeare, therefore, has advanced the actual historical fact only by a few weeks.

The analogies with "Twelfth Night," recognizable in La Môle's brief life-story, do not close with his mission to the English queen. A sweetly wistful pathos, beneath her boyish sauciness, characterizes Shakespeare's Viola, from first to last; and precisely those qualities are accounted for by what we know, as Shakespeare knew, of the closing episode of La Môle's career. Always a close friend, as he had once been the trusted envoy, of Alençon, the youth was drawn, by that prince, to take an active part in the vast Protestant conspiracy—a kind of counterblast to Bartholomew—which, during those last days of the sick king, Charles IX, was forming almost throughout France, for the purpose of crushing the Guises, usurping the government by force, and placing Alençon on the throne. The plot, however, was betrayed, and La Môle, losing his nerve, divulged the whole story to Henry of Navarre's wife, Marguerite de Valois, who, it seems, had been his mistress.² That lady promptly handed it on to her mother, Catherine de Medicis, with the result that, on April 18, 1574, La Môle and one of his accomplices, the

¹ Concerning the massacre of St. Bartholomew, as a theme for a play, it is interesting to note that Marlowe had already written "The Massacre at Paris"; and I regard T.N. as Shakespeare's dramatization not precisely of the massacre, but of the events among which it fell—a theory supporting that argued in my introductory chapter to "Shakespeare and Jonson" (p. xix.) that Shakespeare rarely wrote a play upon a subject that was not already familiar to him upon the stage.

² "Bussy d'Ambois et Mme. de Montsoreau," by Leo Mouton, p. 72.

Comte de Coconas, were arrested, and delivered over to justice, along with the astrologer, Cosmo Ruggieri, concerning whom Catherine wrote to the Procureur Général, La Guesle ; "Faites tout dire à Cosme. Qu'on sache la vérité du mal du roi, et s'il a fait quelque enchantement pour faire aimer La Môle à mon fils d'Alençon, qu'il le défasse."¹ La Môle, put to the most excruciating tortures, burned before fires, and with his feet broken in the boots, remained obdurately dumb, saving only an occasional murmur, "Pauvre La Môle !" accompanied by repeated assertions that he had not conspired, but had sought only to aid his master's escape.² Elizabeth, touched by compassion, pleaded earnestly for the life of the boy with whom she had coquetted ; but she pleaded in vain. La Môle and Coconas were beheaded, to the deep grief of Alençon, whom the news so prostrated that he took to his bed, and lay long upon it, lamenting his ill fortune.³

Thus passes the somewhat gracious figure of La Môle from our story ; and, should the reader hold, as the writer does, that in this mignon and nuncio of Alençon's we have Viola's historical prototype, he may, perhaps, discern an authentic source of the deep pathos, as well as of the charm, underlying Shakespeare's presentation of the character, and can now supply a reason for the unquestionable fact, that this play hovers more exquisitely between comedy and tragedy than does any other of the master's works. Always, of course, in cases such as this, the qualities of the

¹ *Mémoires du Duc de Nevers*, t. 1, p. 73

² "Projets de Mariage de la Reine Elizabeth." *Comte de la Ferrière* (H. de la Ferrière-Percy).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

characters and their relations to each other, and to the action and incidents of the play, are, alike for prudence' sake, and in the interests of dramatic necessity, deliberately transmuted by the playwright; but, even though too fancifully, I sometimes hear an echo of La Môle's pathetic fate in Orsino's lines (*T.N.*, v. 1)

Why should I not, had I the heart to do it,
Like to the Egyptian thief at point of death,
Kill what I love ? . . .
Come, boy, with me ; my thoughts are ripe in
mischief.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew had, of course, tensely strained the relations between the respectively Protestant and Catholic courts of England and France, but, in those "brisk and giddy paced times," not even so portentous an event could long set aside strong personal ambitions, and settled forms of policy ; so that, despite the international tension, we find Alençon, on Sept. 21, 1572, holding a private interview with Walsingham, Elizabeth's ambassador in Paris ; and, on the following day, signing the first of many subsequent letters to the Queen, most of the originals of which are at Hatfield, and can be read in parts two and three of the Hatfield Papers of the Hist. MSS. Commn. That letter of Sept. 21, written by a secretary, and concluded by an illiterate postscript from Alençon's pen, flatters fulsomely Elizabeth's "rare virtues and infinite perfections"—a phrase reminiscent of the "sweet perfections," and so forth, observed in Olivia by Orsino (*T.N.*, i. 1)—and it further states that "his (Alençon's) affection for and fidelity towards her are such that there is nothing in the world . . .

32 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

he would not willingly do to render her more certain thereof."¹

This missive Alençon entrusted to one of his equerries, named Maisonfleur, who, like Valentine, in the "Twelfth Night" scene from which I have just quoted (i. 1), "might not be admitted," and did not, until later, obtain access to the Queen, and break down, at last, her mistrust.

We have seen already that Shakespeare frequently, if not always, and for very comprehensible reasons, drew upon more than one historic original for each of his characters; and I must now introduce a second, and later, envoy of Alençon's who may have carried on, in part, the sequence of ideas that shaped themselves definitely, in Shakespeare's mind, into the character of Viola. This individual is Jehan de Simier, "grand maître de la garde-robe" to Alençon,² and one of his closest friends, who was sent by his master, in a capacity similar to that of La Môle, to continue the negotiations for the royal marriage, which had been in various degrees of prosecution or suspension since the summer of 1572. Simier arrived in London on January 5, 1579, bringing with him not, as Viola did, on her second visit to Olivia, a single jewel (*T.N.*, ii. 4)—

To her in haste; give her this jewel; say
My love can give no place, bide no denay—

but a casket of jewels worth twelve thousand crowns.³ Now La Môle, as we have seen, young though he was, had proved himself no novice in the seductive arts of gallantry and of gracious

¹ Hume's "Courtships of Q. E.," p. 167.

² La Ferrière. "Projets de Mariage de la Reine E." p. 212.

³ Hume's "Courtships of Queen E.," p. 200.

speech. Simier, however, seems to have been no less dulcet-tongued, and equally skilful at the pretty game of gaining Elizabeth's ear, and insinuating himself into her good graces, particularly by delicate love speeches, in which his own mother wit¹ was mingled with that of his master.² Even the sober ambassador, Castelnau de la Mauvissiere, observed the working of Simier's charms upon susceptible Elizabeth, and wrote accordingly to Catherine de Medicis, "This discourse rejuvenates the Queen : she has become more beautiful and bonny than she was fifteen years ago." Within a few days of her first interview with Simier, Elizabeth wrote to Alençon expressing her delight in his envoy, and intimating that "No other advocate is necessary to make his peace with her." Alençon's own words, she tells him, "are worthy not of being written on parchment, but graven on marble"; all of which, with its Shakespearean echo of, "not marble nor the gilded monuments," is quite in the Orsino-Olivia-Viola vein, and reminiscent, though in quality and circumstance, rather than in actual words, of Viola's fervent opening speeches, and of Olivia's willingness to renew acquaintance with her lover's envoy (*T.N.*, i. 5).

OLIVIA. Get you to your lord ;
I cannot love him. Let him send no more;
Unless, perchance, you come to me again
To tell me how he takes it.

At Whitehall, on the 3rd May, 1579, a full meeting of the Council was held, to consider the

¹ La Ferrière, "Projets de Mariage," p. 213.

² "Un courtier raffiné, qui avait une exquise connaissance des gaités d'amour et attrait de la cour." (Record Office, State Papers, France.)

34 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

question of the royal marriage, and their decision being almost unanimously unfavourable, Simier was called in, and informed of it, whereupon he flew into a great rage, flung out of the room, slamming the door behind him, and

went straight to the queen, who was in the garden. She professed great sorrow at her Council's decision, swore to Simier that she would marry in spite of them all, assumed an appearance of settled melancholy in his presence, and sent a loving letter to the prince.¹

Here again, though, of course, in distorted form, are more "Twelfth Night" motives and atmosphere, including the garden, and the melancholy of thwarted love. Further, Elizabeth's pet name for Simier was a punning one, "Singe" (The Monkey); and I think it possible that we may have therein something of the imitation idea, which turns Singe-Simier into Sebastian, the "brother" to, and successor in, the same office, of La Môle; just as Sebastian was of Viola, who aped him, as we know, both from the traditional manner of dressing Viola and Sebastian, identically alike, upon the stage, and from "Twelfth Night," iii. 4, wherein Viola explains that her brother

Went

Still in this fashion, colour, ornament;
For him I imitate.

Here, with Sebastian in mind, the reader may be asking whether Sebastian's sailor friend, Antonio, is easily traceable in our investigation? The

¹ Hume's "Courtships" p. 206. Bernardino de Mendoza wrote to Zayas, on July 26, 1579: "She (the Queen) is so constantly with him (Simier) that I am told that Leicester and Hatton are getting much annoyed."

answer is yes ; the only difficulty being to determine which, if either, of two contemporary and possible Antonios, Shakespeare may have made use, without troubling so much as to disguise the name. His original may have been the Portuguese spy, and agent of the King of Portugal, Antonio Fogaza, who was imprisoned for debt in London in 1579, "when no doubt his papers came into the hands of the authorities,"¹ or he may have been Antonio de Guaras, a Spanish merchant or banker, who had lived in London, serving Spanish interests, and supplying Alva with information. When the rupture with Spain came about, Antonio was arrested (Oct. 19, 1577), sent to the Tower, and threatened with torture. In his case both the money-lending theme, and the arrest, form a possible link with the Antonio of the "Twelfth Night" story ; and, in this connection, it is worth noting that, when about to visit England for a second time, Alençon before going on board ship at Calais met the Portuguese pretender, Don Antonio, and promised to plead his cause with the English queen.²

It is time, however, to pass from the principal to the secondary characters of the comedy, and to endeavour to identify some of these. At once there begins to emerge, from a study of the Hatfield Papers, an individual who, I think, stood, in Shakespeare's mind, for the original of Aguecheek, one Fervaques, whose name, with the letters "aque" in sequence at its close is not

¹ Spanish Papers. Vol. II. Introduction.

² Captain B. M. Ward, in "New Light on 'Twelfth Night,'" has pointed out that Hakluyt ("Voyages, 1904," Vol. V., p. 150) gives the names of several characters of T.N., namely, "Signior Latino Orsino," "The Captaine Antonie of Ascoli," and "The Captaine Sebastian of the same town." See *Foreword*.

36 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

very far from the "Ague" which begin Sir Andrew's surname. This Fervaques, like Sir Andrew, "a great quarreller,"¹ was "un rusé Normand,"² a typical young French, fire-eating Mignon of his time, a friend of Alençon's sister, Marguerite de Valois—as also La Môle had been—and was the man whom Simier described, in a letter to Elizabeth, as "le plus grand et le pire de tous mes ennemis," and of whom he wrote, also to Elizabeth, about 1580³—

Il me santbloict, puisque Monsieur y voict
disclere qu'il estoit satisfait de mon cervice, que
je ne pouvois moins pour mon honeur que de me
bastre avecque Fervaques—

all which, besides recalling the duel, fits in exactly with "Twelfth Night"—Simier (Viola-Sebastian) being a rival of Fervaques, for the favours of Elizabeth, just as Andrew and Viola-Sebastian were for those of Olivia.⁴ About the same time Fervaques wrote to de Marchaumont—of whom more later—to the effect that if Elizabeth succeeded in getting Simier, who had been under a cloud, reinstated,—

le propre jour qu'il reviendra, je quittera son
servisse quar s'il me donnoit tout son bien, par
la teste Dieu, je ne le servirois pas une heure.
Envoie nous de l'argent, autrement nous sommes
a la faim.⁵

¹ cf. *Maria*. "Besides that he's a fool, he's a great quarreller" (*T.N.*, i. 3).

² La Ferrière. "Projets de Mariage," p. 182.

³ Date uncertain. Hatfield State Papers, Pt. II. p. 367.

⁴ cf. Sir Andrew: I saw your niece do more favours to the count's serving-man than ever she bestowed upon me. (*T.N.*, iii. 2).

⁵ Hatfield Papers, Pt. II p. 371

Both these epistles, even to the phrasing, are strongly reminiscent of "Twelfth Night." Simier's "je ne pouvois moins pour mon honneur que de me bastre," compares with Sir Toby's, "The gentleman will for his honour's sake have one bout with you" (*T.N.*, iii. 4); Fervaque's "le propre jour qu'il reviendra, je quittera son servisse" matches Aguecheek's "No, faith, I'll not stay a jot longer"; and it is noteworthy that the Norman's concluding phrase, "Envoie nous de l'argent," is echoed, in "Twelfth Night," ii. 3, by a parting shot of Sir Toby, addressed to Andrew, "Send for more money, Knight." As for that knight's famous, and "excellently ignorant" letter, which so amused the conspirators, if the samples quoted above are insufficient to satisfy the reader, he can find plenty more among the epistles of the Hatfield collection—Alençon himself being, in this respect, about the worst offender of all; and, concerning the duel, Simier wrote to Elizabeth, some time in 1581, "Mon Dieu, ditte à Fervagues que j'ai grant envie de me bastre avec lui"; and followed this with a series of bitter denunciations of his enemy.

Sir Toby himself, to my regret, I have been wholly unable, as yet, even conjecturally to identify; but, since this investigation arises out of clues supplied by Chapman's first play, written around Bussy d'Ambois, the following passage, concerning Bussy's friendship with D'Aubigné, becomes pertinent. It is from Leo Mouton's "Bussy D'Ambois et Mme de Montsoreau" (p. 79).

"C'était un duel qui les avait mis en relations ; d'Aubigné s'était trouvé seconder Fervagues qui

se battait contre Bussy. Comme il arrive souvent, le duel fini, on s'était embrassé et une véritable liaison s'en était suivie, qui dura longtemps."

Here we have Bussy himself brought in, as one of the bellicose Fervaques' opponents ; and also a reminder that the duels of the Mignons, such as that which Shakespeare burlesqued in "*Twelfth Night*," were frequently fought upon the most trivial pretexts, and were followed by reconciliations as meaningless.

In my judgment, however, the Frenchman, Fervaques, was not the only historic prototype of Aguecheek ; since there is evidence to shew that an English courtier also, namely Sir Philip Sidney, stood in part, for that character, the argument here turning upon my belief, already stated, that "*Twelfth Night*," as originally written, was a court masque, produced as propaganda in support of the Alençon marriage. Now Sir Andrew—himself, in the play, a suitor for the hand of Olivia (Queen Elizabeth)—would naturally oppose the claim of Orsino (Alençon) ; and we know that, in 1580, Sidney submitted to the Queen a treatise against the French marriage, and was one of the noblemen who escorted the rejected Alençon back to Antwerp, in 1582. It seems to me also quite possible that Sidney's much-talked-of tennis-court quarrel with Oxford—who was a keen literary rival of his, and a supporter of the Anglo-French marriage—may have provided Shakespeare with a hint. The following words, also, written of Sidney, by Hubert Languet,¹ are significant, in this connection—

¹ Stewart A Pears, 1845.

If the gifts of nature descend by inheritance we cannot wonder that there should be in him a rare union of fine qualities—

because, when linked with the fact that Sidney was a good linguist, and musician, they at once recall Sir Toby's eulogy of Andrew, when challenging Maria's assertion, that the knight is "a very fool and a prodigal"—whereupon Toby exclaims :—

"Fie, that you'll say so ! he plays o' the viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature.

For Maria's subsequent addition, that Sir Andrew was "a great quarreller," we find further foundation in Sidney ; since Languet wrote to him, in 1574, concerning his hot temper, that he must contrive to be less irritable, unless he wishes "to pass his whole life in quarrelling." As for "the gift of a grave," which, thinks Maria, only Andrew's gift of a coward can prevent, the origin of the phrase may, perhaps, be found in the poetic duel between Oxford, as a Euphuist, and Sidney of the opposite literary school, concerning "A kingdom, or a cottage, or a grave."¹

All the other principal characters, excepting the elusive Sir Toby, having now had their share of attention, let us now see whether, without undue distortion of authentic history, we cannot bring Olivia's Steward into the limelight. Again the likely man is not far to seek ; for there was present at Elizabeth's court, during this same

¹ W. J. Courthope's "Hist. of Eng. Poetry," II. 313.
I have already stated my opinion that there is a hint of Oxford in Orsino.

period, one who steps easily into Malvolio's shoes, a certain Clausse de Marchaumont, a financier of great repute, much trusted by, and deep in the confidence of the queen, and identifiable, according to Hume, with that other secret counsellor of Elizabeth's who wrote under the pseudonym "*Le Moine*," a title which, taken conjointly with Marchaumont's three-syllabled name, is not, in sound, so very far from Malvolio, and tallies with the somewhat monkish ways of Olivia's Steward—"He's a kind of puritan"—as also with Bussy's phrase, from Chapman's "*Bussy D'Ambois*" (iii. 1).

Your conscience is too nice,
And bites too hotly of the puritan spice—

words which, in view of their context, are probably reminiscent of Malvolio.

These coincidences alone, however, remarkable as they are, would hardly justify the certain inference that they reveal the original of Malvolio, did we not know, from the Spanish Papers, that, on the 11th April, 1581, on the occasion of Elizabeth's visit to Drake's ship, "*The Pelican*," at Deptford, Bernadino de Mendoza wrote to the King of Spain

She (the queen) also despatched de Mery with a letter in her own hand, written without the knowledge of any of her ministers, to Alençon, in answer to one that he had written to her by de Mery. Marchaumont also sent with it a purple & gold garter¹ belonging to the queen, which slipped down and was trailing as she entered Drake's

¹ cf. the *yellow* stockings cross-gartered, and the "*branched velvet gown*." Notice also the stooping, and picking-up motive which follows—exactly paralleled by Malvolio and the letter.

ship (the *Pelican* at Deptford). Marchaumont stooped and picked it up, and the Queen asked for it, promising him that he should have it back when he reached home, as she had nothing else with which to keep her stocking up. Marchaumont returned it, and she put it on before him; presenting him with it when she got back to Westminster.

Now that incident, as above recorded, is strongly suggestive of the garter and letter business in "Twelfth Night"; but it becomes doubly so when linked with the fact, that the Queen, on that very occasion, instead of knighting Drake herself, handed the sword to Marchaumont, authorizing him to give the accolade therewith. This he did, doubtless with some inward swelling of head and heart; and I suggest that, in this incident, we have the basis, not of the garter and letter episodes merely, but also of the exalted condition of mind that led up to them—"to be Count Malvolio . . . sitting in my state"—since, to an ambitious and imaginative mind, there is close connection between the giving of an accolade, and the receiving of it, in each case by the royal sword. We have, moreover, further evidence that the incident was remembered, as being of good omen, since "for a long time afterwards Alençon, in his letters to the Queen, refers to his "bele jartiere" as a talisman which is the cause of all his good fortune,"¹ a phrase that at once recalls Malvolio's "Fortune, all is fortune!"

The coming of Alençon's envoys, with great pomp and ceremony, to the English court (April, 1581), for the purpose of negotiating the mar-

¹ Hume's "Courtships," p. 236.

riage, as described by Mr. Hume, offers another strange sequence of resemblances to well-known episodes in "Twelfth Night." When, for example, Lansac presents to Elizabeth a painter commissioned, by Catherine de Medicis, to paint her portrait, the Queen, "ever avid for compliments, said he must represent her with a veil over her face,"¹ an incident that recalls Viola's entry to the veiled Olivia, with the well-known lines (*T.N.*, i. 5)

VIOL. Good madam, let me see your face.

OLIV. Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain and show you the picture.

And should the reader hold, as the writer does, that Marchaumont, "the Monk," and the garter incident, point to Malvolio, he may detect a certain significance in this further passage from Mr. Hume, which I quote in full, because he—having, it seems, no inkling of the 'Twelfth Night' parallels—may be regarded as a wholly impartial witness.

Elizabeth suddenly sent de Vray to Alençon, with a private, autograph letter, in the sealing wax of which she embedded a diamond; and at the same time Marchaumont wrote urging his master to come over and gain the prize by a coup-de-main, on the strength of a document which he had obtained from the Committee of the Council containing some favourable expressions towards the match. At the same time Marchaumont was

¹ *Ibid.* p, 240.

brought to a lodging in the gardens of Whitehall and an elaborate pretence of keeping some important personage concealed there was made.

Here I find it difficult to escape the conclusion that, in this episode, with its "private autograph letter,"¹ its "gaining-the-prize-by-a-coup-de-main" motive; followed by "favourable expressions towards the match," an "elaborate pretence," and the bringing of Marchaumont-Malvolio to the gardens of Whitehall, we have more historic sources for the plot against Olivia's steward, and its letter-scene in her garden, supplementing those already recorded, as supplying material for the cross-gartering episode, and for Malvolio's supposed causes of exaltation.

When enquiring into the origins of Sir Andrew Aguecheek, we noted that Shakespeare seems to have drawn from a Frenchman, Fervaques, and an Englishman, Sir Philip Sidney; and I am fairly confident that, in shaping Malvolio, he also had a Frenchman and an Englishman at once in mind. The first, as we have seen, was Marchaumont; the second I believe to have been Sir Christopher Hatton, who, at about the time with which "Twelfth Night" seems to be historically concerned, was Queen Elizabeth's Captain of the Bodyguard, a post to which he had been appointed in 1573. The Queen quite certainly valued Hatton's services; for when, in that same year, 1573, he fell sick, she showed as much concern as Olivia did at the misfortunes of her Steward; and sent Hatton to the "Spaw," to recuperate: but the strongest piece of evidence connecting Sir

¹ Marchaumont, "The Monk's," own letters to Queen Elizabeth are only a degree less loving than those of Simier, "the Monkey."

44 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Christopher with Malvolio is the fact that, as Captain B. M. Ward has pointed out,¹ the motto, or "posy," with which Hatton, who had a literary bent, signed his poems, was "*Si Fortunatus Infœlix*," which recalls at once the signature of the famous, forged letter to Malvolio—"The Fortunate Unhappy"—the twisting of this posy from Hatton's own unacknowledged writings into a forged, and secret, letter, addressed, as he supposes, to himself, being quite typical of Shakespeare's method, in transmuting historic fact.²

That Sir Christopher Hatton, in common with almost all other young courtiers of his day, wrote love-letters to the Queen, is well known, Sir Harris Nicolas, in his "*Memoirs of the Life and Times of Sir Christopher Hatton*," quoting several, one of which, written in June, 1573, is quite in the Malvolio atmosphere and vein.

My wits are overwrought with thought. I find myself amazed. Bear with me, my most dear sweet lady. Passion overcometh me. I can write no more. Love me: for I love you. . . . He speaketh it that most dearly loveth you.

It is significant that, in another letter of the same month, Hatton wrote to the Queen, from Antwerp

Reserve it (a favour) to the Sheep, he hath no tooth to bite; where(as) the Boar's tusk may both rase and tear—

¹ "*A Hundred Sundrie Flowers*," ed. Captain B. M. Ward Intro., p. 12.

² The apparent double origin of many of the characters may be due, in part, to the desirability of keeping topical allusions up-to-date in revivals of the play.

the last line being, obviously, a reference to Oxford, who was, in part, and secondarily to Alençon, an original of Orsino, and in history, as we have seen, a supporter of the Alençon marriage, and a bitter personal enemy of Hatton's. In this connection I incline to agree with Captain Holland,¹ that Malvolio's mysterious phrase, when reading the letter (*T.N.*, ii. 5)—

These be her very C's, her U's, and her T's ;
and thus she makes her great P's—

may be aimed, not at Queen Elizabeth's original prototype Olivia, but at the Countess of Pembroke, the husband of whose successor in that title is one of "the incomparable pair of brethren," to whom the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's works was to be dedicated.

Thus we see emerging, little by little, into this story, the fascinating figure of young Oxford, who, as I shall endeavour to shew in a subsequent chapter, stands, almost certainly, as the original for Hamlet. This Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of the ancient Oxford line—ward of Queen Elizabeth, and son-in-law to Burleigh—was with the Earl of Surrey, and Lord Windsor, one of the three noblemen proposed as hostages for the coming of Alençon,

because, although they are only youths, their houses are very ancient and of high rank.²

That Oxford, like Hatton and the rest, whether out of genuine loyalty and affection, or as an essential means of advancement, made love to

¹ "Shakespeare through Oxford Glasses," p. 96.

² Spanish Calendar. Bernardino de Mendoza to the King of Spain, April 8, 1579.

46 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Elizabeth, we know ; and that the Queen, after her fashion, responded, we know also, from many contemporary records, as well as from Elizabeth's own words, relative to the Alençon negotiations,¹ that "she would not be led to church by so juvenile looking a man as Oxford."

Yet another incident connecting Oxford with the Alençon comedy, must be set down here. On December 19, 1571—eight months only prior to the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, which may be taken as a central date for "Twelfth Night"—Oxford was married, in Westminster Abbey, with the Queen as chief wedding-guest, to Anne Cecil, daughter of Lord Burleigh, who, as I shall endeavour to show later on, are, in part at least, the originals of Ophelia and Polonius, in the Hamlet play. After the ceremony, Chief Secretary Burleigh gave, at Cecil House, a banquet, concerning which the French Ambassador, La Mothe Fénelon, wrote to the King of France, that he met the Earl of Leicester during the feast, and had a long talk with him, upon the subject of the proposed marriage.² Thus, upon either side, were intrigue and counter-intrigue woven, between Protestants against Catholics, and between Catholics against Protestants, until the very crown was in danger, and no man knew whom he might trust. On June 2, 1572, less than three months before the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Oxford's first cousin, and close friend, Norfolk, was executed, for deep complicity in the Roman Catholic plot against the Queen.

We are not here concerned with the history of

¹ La Ferrière, "Projets de Mariage," p. 107.

² Captain B. M. Ward's "The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford," p. 53.

Elizabeth's reign, as such ; but it is surely interesting, and wholly pertinent to our study, to observe that even while the events, both humorous and sinister, are coming about, which will ultimately shape themselves into Shakespeare's most exquisite comedy, "*Twelfth Night*," so also, in the same atmosphere, among the same individuals, and at the same court, incidents are happening, and destinies are being fulfilled, from which the master's genius will fashion the most compelling and human tragedy of all time, "*Hamlet*."

Before closing our study of these at once irresistibly charming, and intensely repellent, beings, of the Valois and Tudor courts, and of events in which they figured, in their relations to "*Twelfth Night*," I would recall the words of Walter Pater, who, though, like Mr. Hume, unconscious, or not fully conscious, of the analogy, has expressed, in his book "*Gaston de Latour*," the very spirit of Shakespeare's play.

He (Gaston) saw them (the Valois) irresistibly, in connection with the end actually reached, moving, to the sound of wedding music, through a world of dainty gestures, amid sonnets and flowers, and perhaps the most refined art the world has ever seen, to their surfeit of blood.

And when confronted, as his mind often is, by the question how the deeds of violence which occupy the foreground of French history during the reigns of Catherine's sons, could leave any "place at all for the quiet building of character," his wisdom and intuition—though still, perhaps, without conscious relationship to "*Twelfth Night*"—at once supply the answer, namely that

"the more permanent forces alike of human nature and of the natural world, are, on the whole, in the interest of tranquillity and sanity, and of the sentiments proper to man."

To Shakespeare's ever present conviction of the fundamental sanity of nature, allied with a poet's imagination more ideally harmonious than any ever yet granted to one of Adam's race, we owe this historical fantasy "*Twelfth Night*"—for fantasy, and nothing else, beneath his magical touch, this potential tragedy has become.

"Fantastic!" writes Pater: "Fantastic! from first to last, that was the descriptive epithet; and the very word, carrying us back to Shakespeare, reminds one how characteristic of the age such habit was, and that it was pre-eminently due to Italy."

So close, indeed, as we have seen, is the general trend of this play to the very names, incidents, characters, and even the dialogue of authentic history, that Shakespeare, one concludes, must have had access to the original contemporary letters, or must have been in the close confidence of many, who, whether as eye-witnesses, or through personal or documentary knowledge, were in full possession of the facts.

Remembering also that Chapman's imitations of "*Twelfth Night*," in the first of the Bussy plays, coupled with his remarks therein, concerning the English court, first gave us the clue to these discoveries—if such I may be allowed to call them—concerning the historic originals of Shakespeare's play, it is interesting further to recall the fact, that Chapman's two heroes, Bussy and Biron, come both, indirectly, into the Alençon

story ; for when Alençon was in the Netherlands, in 1582-3, Marshal de Biron himself joined the prince, in his unsuccessful attempt to seize the strong places of Flanders, and to garrison them with Frenchmen. In the attack upon Antwerp Fervaques was taken prisoner, and Biron's son was killed.

Concerning Bussy's slight relation to the story, it has been generally supposed—Mr. Hume states it as a recognized fact—that he came to England as one of Alençon's envoys, in August, 1578 ; but a note by M. Leo Mouton, in his book, "*Bussy D'Ambois et Mme. de Montsoreau*," seems to make it clear that Bussy has been mistaken for De Quincé, whose name, in the correspondence of the time, is frequently, and variously, mis-spelt, as Cuissy, Quysy, etc. Bussy, however, though he never came in person to London, is, nevertheless, linked up, naturally, with our subject ; for it was after a ball given by Elizabeth, at Greenwich, on August 23, 1579, —with Alençon half concealed behind the arras, and the queen signalling to him, while the courtiers pretended to see nothing—that the news of Bussy's death was received at the English court.

Even these remote connections, between the courtship of Elizabeth by Alençon, and the central figure of Chapman's two best-known plays, help to explain, and to render natural, that dramatist's concern with, and interest in, the plot and people of "*Twelfth Night*," which, among other things, it is the business of a subsequent chapter to reveal.

CHAPTER III

THE PRE-SHAKESPEAREAN ORIGINS OF HAMLET.

Suggests that Hamlet was, though unconsciously, based, by Shakespeare, in part, upon the ancient nature-myth, in which the prince, in the primitive conflict-of-the-seasons drama, stands for Winter, just as Orestes does in Greek tragedy. Traces the passage of the pre-historic Hamlet saga down through the Greek and Roman ages, and thence, through the Danish of Saxo Grammaticus, as Amlodi, and the French of Belleforest, into the ken of the Elizabethans.

THAT Shakespeare's play, "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," could claim origins of sufficient interest and importance to deserve a whole chapter to themselves, is a proposition which may surprise some of my readers, and provoke from others scornful dissent ; yet I have long been convinced—and I hope to justify my conviction, as I proceed—that a part of the sense of universality, which a reading, or a sympathetic performance, of the play so often creates in imaginative and impressionable minds, is due, in part, to the truth, which Shakespeare had unconsciously assimilated, that Hamlet, in its origins, is a nature-myth, the beginnings of which are lost far back in the abysm of time.

Man is, by instinct, a creature prone to express himself dramatically ; and every one of us, in his or her degree, is potentially an actor, and has been so from the first moment when, in street or nursery, he, or she, said to a playmate, "Let's pretend," and straightway that street or nursery ceased to be either of those, but was transformed,

instead, into a smugglers' cave, or a bears' den, or an enchanted forest ; while the pretenders, at the same instant, were no longer small children at play, but were become pirates or princesses, or fairy kings, or necromancers, or hobgoblins, or anything else that was adventurous, fanciful, and imaginatively alluring, and to be desired.

Having arrived at this point, our subject passes from children's pretences, to those of primitive man, who was, and is, himself no more than a grown-up child ; and, therefore, also, naturally, an actor. But what did he first enact ? About what sort of ideas did our earliest drama originate, develop, and find scope ? Scholars competent to answer the question divide themselves, generally, into two groups, one of which avers that our drama began with ritual performances and celebrations during the obsequies of great chieftains, heroes, and kings, while the other ascribes the same phenomena to a development of certain forms of imitative nature-worship. Both theories, no doubt, are, in part, and in principle, true ; but our immediate concern is with the second ; and I here ask, from my readers, some provisional acceptance of the idea that, deep in the heart of mother-nature, lie hidden the authentic beginnings of the play.

Primitive man, and, indeed, all mankind, everywhere, and in all ages, can live happily and prosperously, only upon the condition of keeping himself close to nature. Nature is his first God ; and nature-worship, in one form or another, is his first religion ; the recurring physical processes, and alternating conditions which make up the seasonal round expressing themselves, to him, still thinking tribally, in the form of a personified

conflict, of perpetual nature-drama, in which heat wars against cold, light against darkness, abundance against sterility, calm against tempest, and in which love is ceaselessly pitted against hate, as life is against death. Primitive man, in fact, tends to regard nature-forces as a series of personal contests between winter and summer, beneath which, subconsciously, or with dim and groping apprehension, he envisages also deeper, and yet more mysterious, ideas of death, sacrifice, and renewal—the death, or sleep, of winter being regarded by him, in some sort, as a sacrificial act, which contains in it, nevertheless, the everlasting promise, and assured hope, of spiritual and material renewal, which is spring :—

Winter's rains and ruins are over,
 And all the season of snows and of sins,
 The days dividing lover and lover,
 The light that loses, the night that wins :
 And time remembered is grief forgotten,
 And frosts are slain, and flowers begotten ;
 And in green underwood and in cover,
 Blossom by blossom, the spring begins.

Right down to our own time these ideas of sacrifice and renewal are clearly visible, in surviving forms of primitive or simple drama. Sir Edmund Chambers, in the first volume of his "*Mediæval Stage*," has reminded us that the still popular children's game, "*Oranges and Lemons*," with its refrain,

Here comes a candle to light you to bed !

And here comes a chopper, to chop off your head !
 is, undoubtedly, a survival from a time when parents were wont to sacrifice the creature that they loved, best on earth, to placate some wrath-

ful deity ; nor can there be any doubt that our national sport, football, which, on Saturday afternoons, throughout the country, numbers its devotees by millions, was also originally a form of sacrificial ritual drama, with the victim's head, human or other, for the ball.¹

Even to this day, as I have read, a north of England village farmer will walk out into his orchard, in the month of February, and there fire his gun, point-blank, at his favourite pear-tree, as he will tell you, " for look " (luck), but actually, though he knows it not, as a simple act of ritual imitative drama, illustrating the Bible text, " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit," and expressing, at the same time, the idea that, by assisting with a well-aimed shot, at the mimic death of his pear-tree, and thus better assuring its needed winter's rest, he is assuring also a good crop of fruit, in the coming autumn.

Even in certain forms of simple, and popular, modern melodrama, the same ideas of conflict, death, sacrifice, and renewal are plainly visible—a good instance being Sir J. Martin Harvey's dramatic stand-by ; " The Only Way," wherein the conflict is that of the French Revolution, and the sacrifice is Sidney Carton's, while the renewal is symbolized in the love-affair between hero and heroine.

Primitive drama, then, among savage and uncivilized peoples, almost certainly began with quasi-religious, quasi-magical, quasi-dramatic or ritualistic performances—of which May-day cere-

¹ See my article on Primitive Drama in " The Shakespeare Review " for September, 1928.

54 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

monies are an example, all consciously imitating the seasonal round, because primitive players, wholly dependent, for their supplies of food—as also are their descendants to-day—upon the normal sequences of summer and winter, sunshine and rain, were imbued also with a crude idea, which lies at the basis of all imitative magic, that they could best make sure of getting their needs supplied, by paying to nature that sincerest form of flattery, imitation—that is to say they reproduced natural processes in ritual mime ; another reason for their imitations, in primitive drama, being, I think, this—that these players saw, in the seasonal round, a symbol of three great experiences universal in their own lives—spring corresponding to birth, summer to adolescence and marriage—the union of earth and sun, with crops for progeny—autumn to decay, and winter to death ; while, for those who believed in continuity of life, the resurrection of the soul, into another existence, was annually foretold by the next spring, with its rebirth, or renewal, of nature, and the return to a waiting earth, of light and warmth, of leaf and flower, of life and love, and such other kindred things as make sub-lunary existence sweet.

In the spring a livelier iris mantles on the burnished
dove ;

In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns
to thoughts of love.

That, to some minds, such ideas will seem so far-fetched and fanciful as to deserve not even a moment's consideration, I am well aware ; and it has already been objected, against my theory,¹

¹ By Mr. Arthur Machen, in "The Observer," Aug. 8, 1926.

that it falls at once, by reason of primitive man having been a hunter, before he became a tiller of the soil. That assumption, however, I take to be no more than partially, and relatively true ; and, moreover, granting that our remotest ancestor was mainly a hunter, his dependence upon nature, for his well-being, still holds, as is proved, for example, by his totemism, or habit of identifying himself, tribally, by sacrifice and other religious rites, with some animal through whose means he hopes thus to assure, for himself and for his progeny, in some measure, at least, the strength of the horse, the speed of the deer, the vision of the eagle, or the scent of the dog.

Thus, by dim degrees, down the centuries, the religions, as well as the drama, of our first progenitors, developed out of their dependence upon nature. Deifying, at last, or almost deifying, their young men—the Kouretes of the ancient Greeks—as representing the strongest, bravest, swiftest, the most vital forces of the race—there develops also, in time, a further tendency, to award a high place, in their tribal counsels, to the wisest, to the magician, perhaps, especially to that particular type of magician—such as the rainmaker—who can best help them to keep upon friendliest terms with nature. From him will develop, in time, along one line of specialization, the hero-scientist ; along another the hero-priest or god ; though both these, at one stage in their evolution, may be deified, to some degree.¹

Four years ago, I passed a day in the Alban hills of the Campagna, where, almost within view of Rome, hidden in the last spur of the Apen-

¹ See the early pages of "The Magical Origin of Kings," by J. G. Frazer.

nines, and still embowered in woods, shines the beautiful lake of Nemi, at the bottom of which, amid the tangle and the ooze, are rotting the remains of the emperor's barges, while above, upon the slope of the hill, grows the forest wherein was the once sacred grove of Diana of the Woodlands, within which, for so long, her honoured temple stood.

The priest of Diana, there, at Nemi, was Rex Nemorensis, or King of the Wood, combining the regal and sacred offices ; and his mythical predecessor was Hippolytus, founder of that sacred grove, and first king of Nemi, who, a mortal, had, for nominal wife, an immortal, Diana herself, the huntress, woodland goddess of wild creatures, of cattle, and of fruits. Now this king of Nemi, as all readers of Macaulay know, was

The king who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain,

the royal priest, that is, whose function it was to guard the sacred tree, until his destined successor—like himself, a runaway slave from Rome—should find strength to break down a bough from it ; conquer the conqueror withal ; and become, for a while, king-priest, in the other's stead.

But what does it mean—this mystical legend of antiquity ? Who is this priestly monarch, thus mystically married to the goddess of fertility, and representing the founder of the grove, until—become so weakened by age, that physical inferiority can be proved upon him—he falls, beneath a weapon torn from his own tree ? Diana we know, of old ; 'but who was Hippolytus ?—Hippolytus, it seems, was, in his origin, simply the spirit of fertility in the tree, which,

when its strength has waned, with autumn, is slain by every winter, and by every summer renewed ; and the priestly king is none other than his incarnate representative and successor.¹

But what, you may ask, has all this got to do with Hamlet ? I answer : very much ; for Hamlet, and Hippolytus, too, are both representatives of nature-forces ; both alike, in one guise or another, are going to pass into the great Greek drama, that is to grow out of the personification of those forces ; and both are to take recognized places in the stage history, primitive and literary, of our own days—Hamlet as the idealized prince of the Renaissance ; and Hippolytus and Diana—bride and bridegroom, in mimic marriage, of the powers of vegetation—as two royalties, of our now vanishing spring-time festivals, and popular folk-drama—the king and queen of the May.² Subsequently, Hippolytus, the tree-spirit, as all the world knows, becomes a central figure of Greek literary drama ; and, as the bastard son of Theseus, King of Athens and Trozên, and of the Amazon Queen, Hippolyta—a royal pair who also have their established place in other Elizabethan plays than “ *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* ”—is transmuted into the hapless hero, and victim, of that world-famous, prize-winning tragedy, by Euripides, which bears the name, “ *Hippolytus*,” and was first played at Athens, B.C. 429.

Long before that time, however, in the minds of these gifted Hellenes—a race highly imaginative and intellectual, and, moreover, singularly adept at borrowing, and absorbing, all that they

¹ Frazer’s “ *Magical Origin of Kings*,” pp. 9-16.

² *Ibid.* pp. 160, 161.

could best utilize in earlier neighbouring civilizations, such as that of Egypt—there had developed a habit, not only of personifying, as we have seen, the seasonal conflicts, which formed the basis of their primitive drama, but also of fitting them to their folk-tales ; so that, in due process of time, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and the other great dramatic poets of the Hellenic age, confronted with the task of providing their nation's plays, found these elemental nature-figures, and their stories, already incorporated, consciously or unconsciously, into the heroic national legends, which were to form the Attic drama's central theme.¹

Many another national Greek legendary hero, besides Hippolytus, could, I suspect, be traced back to his original, in some recognizable nature-force, did our existing knowledge provide us with the necessary clues ; but, be that as it may, there certainly exists, in ancient Greek drama, at least one other typical, and most interesting, nature-figure, whose character and actions are woven into its very fabric—since he is present in no less than seven of the few extant Greek tragedies that have come down to us—namely Orestes, the half-insane prince, who, in the Agamemnon story, returning from exile, and finding that his mother, Clytemnestra, has caused her own husband to be slain, and has married the murderer, Ægisthus, takes swift vengeance upon them both.²

¹ It is worth remembering, in this connection, that the early Greek mystery god, Dionysus, about whose altar the Greek drama developed, was himself none other than the gradual personification of the life-force, as expressed in the group consciousness or collective thinking of the race. See Introduction to "Themis," by Jane E. Harrison.

² See "Hamlet and Orestes," by Professor Gilbert Murray.

Who, then, are these headstrong and violent members of this royal house of ancient Hellas? Ostensibly they are what their names shew them to be—heroes and heroines of the legendary struggle between Greece and Troy; “slices from the great banquet of Homer,” as Æschylus described his own tragedies: actually, by origin, they are personifications of the nature-battle between the seasons—Orestes, dark of soul, and stormy-hearted, being the Winter, Clytemnestra the earth-mother, ready, as the earth-mother always is, for her progeny’s sake, and for ours, to take each succeeding sun into her arms; and Ægisthus, the sun, the life-giver, destined to fall before every winter, and to be by every spring renewed, and received with welcome again, by a waiting and hungry world.

Now then, at last, the secret, long withheld, is out; for the reader will have guessed, ere this, that the story of the half-deranged Greek prince is simply an earlier version of the familiar Hamlet theme, and that—though Shakespeare may never have known it—the Orestes and Hamlet sagas are, at bottom, and substantially, one, as the author, or authors, of “Fratricide Punished”—that early version of “Hamlet,” acted by the English players in Germany—seem to have recognized, when they made Corambus (Polonius) say of the prince: “He (Hamlet) is as mad as the Greek madman,” meaning thereby, of course, Orestes.¹

¹ There are innumerable references to Orestes in Elizabethan drama; the comparison with Pylades being referred to by Carlo, in Jonson’s “Every Man out of His Honour” (iv. 4), as already “an old stale interlude device”; but the above is the only case I know in which an Elizabethan seems consciously to appreciate any connection between the Orestes and Hamlet sagas.

Alfred de Musset wrote, in his “Essay on Tragedy”: “Hamlet is as great as Orestes.”

Hamlet, then, with his cloak of darkness, and avenging sword, is the winter of discontent ; Claudius, the murderous usurping uncle, now King of Denmark, and married to Gertrude its Queen, is none other than Ægisthus the sun, married wrongfully, and yet not wrongfully, to the earth-mother, who, husbandless, must live sterile else ; and Horatio, Hamlet's good friend, is Pylades, who accompanied Orestes in his wanderings, and shared the secrets of his heart. In this story of Orestes, then, we have, so far as I know, the first definite literary emergence of the Hamlet motive, and of the Hamlet individual, from out the shrouding mists of antiquity, although, contemporaneously almost with the boyhood of Æschylus, we find approximately the same story appearing, also, in legendary Roman history, with the feigned madness of Lucius Junius Brutus, as recorded in the chronicles of Livy.

But how did Hamlet reach the Elizabethans ? The answer is that the story seems to have spread gradually northward, from Greece and Rome, or else to have lain hidden contemporaneously, from still earlier time, in the folklore of the northern peoples ; and to have taken root in Scandinavia, Iceland, and Ireland, with a certain Amlodi, or Hamlet for its central figure and hero. The now historic name first appears in a lament by the Irish queen, Gormflaith about A.D. 919, as that of a northern hero of the battle of Ath Cliath ; and then again, some decades later, in Snaebjörn's Icelandic poem of adventures in Arctic seas, with a mysterious reference to the grinding of Hamlet's meal¹ ;

¹ See the "Shakespeare Classics" volume, "The Sources of *Hamlet*: with Essay on the Legend," by Sir Israel Gollancz.

though the work to which we owe, indirectly, Shakespeare's "Hamlet," is the thirteenth century "History of Denmark," by Saxo Grammaticus, who, with embellishments from his own fancy, lifted the legendary figure of Amlodi, into the accepted Danish national hero. By the seventeenth century, the name, Hamlet, had become a nickname for an imbecile ; and the hero himself—according to the distinguished Danish novelist, Herr Jensen—was, in one aspect, a symbolical folk-figure, personifying the suffering Danish peasantry, oppressed by the truculent, half-brigand nobility, of the dark and early Middle Ages, and—because it dare not openly speak out its mind, or plead its own cause—compelled to dissemble, to become the ninny, and the sly fool, veiling a too dangerous truth beneath quaint antics, and ironic gibes.

Saxo's Amlodi, of course, though noble-born, is little better than a clown. Assuming a madness that is without dignity, he is far removed, except in circumstances, from Shakespeare's idealized prince ; yet many of the analogies between the various versions of the story are very curious and striking. Both Hamlet and Amlodi return from England to a funeral—Amlodi to his own obsequies, where his sudden appearance strikes all men utterly aghast, and Hamlet to Ophelia's burying. In both English and Greek versions, moreover, the hero is away from home when the tragedy opens—Hamlet in Wittenberg, and Orestes in Phocis : further, as we have seen, both men have a devoted and familiar friend, Horatio in one case, and Pylades in the other ; both men have an opportunity to wreak their vengeance—"Now might I do it pat !"—and

62 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

both refrain ; in both cases, the murdered kings—Agamemnon, and Hamlet's father—are held up as paragons ; and in both versions, as also in all the ancient plays, Orestes, like Hamlet, is in close relationship with a young woman, and an old man—spring and autumn, to this winter, one might say—namely with his sister, Electra, who corresponds to Ophelia, and with Electra's only true friend ; not, in this case, her father, but an old and trusted servant of the dead king, as Polonius is of a living queen.

Beginning, then, in nature-myth, and retaining always, therefrom, a certain elemental turbulence, Hamlet's figure and story appear and re-appear, with strange persistence, throughout centuries of European literature. The fact that seasons are changeless, and that mankind is still materially dependent upon their normality, accounts, no doubt, in part, for the legend's unchanging shape, its persistence, and even for its elemental grandeur. There remains, however, another explanation ; and many will concur in Professor Gilbert Murray's solution of the enigma,¹ which is, that there exists, unconsciously, between artists and poets, a closer mental unity than we are generally aware of, or disposed readily to admit, and that there passes down the ages, mysteriously, from mind to mind, a far deeper and stronger current of ancient tradition, and of inherited truth, than is ordinarily understood ; a form of intuition which it is among the highest prerogatives of men of genius—as it was supremely of Shakespeare—to absorb, and, for the joy of succeeding generations, to adapt to the peculiar needs of their own time.

¹ Hamlet and Orestes : A Study in Traditional Types. Brit. Acad. Annual Shakespearean Lecture, 1914.

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORIC ORIGINALS OF SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET

Endeavours to show that, just as Shakespcare built a great comedy, "Twelfth Night," around a group of personalities prominent at the English court, about the time of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew ; so also he wrote his great tragedy of Hamlet about an allied group of contemporary men and women—the historic original of Hamlet being Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, one of the principal supporters of the Alençon marriage ; with Oxford's father-in-law, Burleigh, as Polonius ; his wife, Anne Cecil, in part, as Ophelia ; and his cousin, Horatio de Vere, as Horatio. It is further shown that many incidents in Oxford's life are incorporated into the play.

THAT the ultimate origins of "Hamlet" are to be found in the nature-myth, which, taking literary shape in the Hellenic drama, and passing thence to Rome, came at last, through the Danish of Saxo Grammaticus, and Belleforest's translation, into the ken of the Elizabethan dramatists, the preceding chapter will, I hope, have made clear. All these early influences, however, cannot have been more than dimly, if at all, present to Shakespeare's mind ; and there can be no reasonable doubt that, following his usual custom, Shakespeare conceived his tragedy as a development of, and improvement upon, the earlier Elizabethan dramas of revenge, by Kyd and others, that had been long popular upon the London stage—and of which "Hamlet" was to be the culminating achievement—basing it principally, as is generally supposed, upon the

lost Hamlet drama, by Kyd, perhaps, of which, it seems, we have many echoes in "Fratricide Punished," besides the better known one in Nash's lines concerning "handfulls of Tragically speeches."

Now I have already endeavoured to shew in my "Shakespeare, Jonson, and Wilkins as Borrowers," that Shakespeare, usually, if not invariably, chose for the subjects of his plays themes that he had already seen tried out successfully upon the stage, basing "Lear," for example, in part upon "Titus Andronicus," and, in part, upon another old play of Peele's; and "Macbeth" upon "Arden of Feversham" supplemented by Holinshed. So also—as I hazard the conjecture—Shakespeare fastened upon this early "Hamlet," retaining, probably, most of its plot; but, as his fashion was, wholly transmuting the characters and flooding them with his own matchless poetry, idealism, or humour.

Here, however, we must pause, to consider carefully who those characters, and especially the Prince of Denmark, are likely to have been. Something, at least, of Shakespeare himself, and—noting the tragedy's connection with "Julius Cæsar"—a hint or two, perhaps, from Robert, Earl of Essex, may have gone to the shaping of Hamlet; but the man who, in my judgment, stands out clearly, as Shakespeare's model, for the central figure of his play, was quite another Earl, him of whom we have already caught an occasional glimpse during our investigations into the origins of "Twelfth Night"—the fascinating young nobleman, of high and ancient lineage, whom we saw twice refusing his sovereign's request, that he would dance

before the French envoys, who heralded the coming of Alençon.

This long-held belief of mine—that Hamlet and Oxford were historically one—first promulgated, so far as I know, by Mr. J. T. Looney¹—has been fortified, so far as I am concerned, into absolute certainty, by Capt. B. M. Ward's valuable book, "The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford," and finally confirmed by my own investigations into Chapman's plays, especially "The Revenge of Bussy," wherein Chapman, who must have known the truth, makes innuendoes pointing, unmistakably, to that conclusion. These are considered, in detail, in chapter seven of this book, to which I refer the reader, though, for convenience' sake, I shall refer to it again in this chapter also.

But, before proceeding briefly to set forth my case, let me remind readers of a conclusion to which some of them may already have come, that the plays "Twelfth Night" and "Hamlet," in one form or another, must have been more or less simultaneously present to Shakespeare's mind during, and round about, the year 1598; and, since we have already seen in chapter ii., that Shakespeare's imagination was vividly at work upon Alençon, and his representatives at Elizabeth's court, before, and after, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572, and that Oxford and his group were equally prominent at the same court, at the same time, it is, I think, a fair inference that 1572 was a key-year for the inception of the historical background of both plays. Consider, for example, Oxford's marriage at Westminster Abbey, on December 19,

¹ Shakespeare Identified.

66 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

1571, at the age of twenty-one, with Mistress Anne Cecil, Queen Elizabeth being the principal guest. Concerning that function La Mothe Fénelon, the French ambassador, wrote to the King of France :—

Last Tuesday I had audience with the Queen ; and on Wednesday she took me with her to dine with Lord Burleigh, who was celebrating the marriage of his daughter with the Earl of Oxford.

The guests at that function listened to an Eclogue, in Latin hexameters, written by Giles Fletcher, uncle of John Fletcher, the dramatist ; and on the same occasion, La Mothe met the Earl of Leicester, and had a long talk with him concerning the proposed marriage between the Queen and the Duke of Anjou.¹ At the end of the following August, as we have seen, there reached England—as Oxford phrased it, in a letter to Lord Burleigh—

News which here doth ring dolefully in the ears of every man, of the murder of the Admiral of France, and a number of noblemen and worthy gentlemen, and such as greatly have in their life-time honoured the Queen's Majesty our Mistress.²

Certainly therefore, the St. Barthélemy was as terribly significant an event to Oxford as to Alençon,³ or to any other historic original character of "Twelfth Night" ; and, as a final

¹ Ward's "Oxford," p. 63.

² Ibid, p. 71.

³ Alençon, by the way, is referred to, in that same letter, by his familiar title of Monsieur, of which, as we have seen "Orsino" is almost an anagram.

hint that, if Oxford be Hamlet, the two plays may have been shaped from among the same milieu, let me quote here from the letter sent by the Spanish Ambassador, Bernardino de Mendoza, to the King of Spain's Secretary, concerning a progress of Queen Elizabeth, in 1578 :

The next day the Queen sent twice to tell the Earl of Oxford, who is a very gallant lad, to dance before the Ambassadors, whereupon he replied that he hoped her Majesty would not order him to do so, as he did not want to entertain Frenchmen—

a refusal which, it seems, was due not, as surface indication might shew, to any hostility to the Alençon marriage, but rather to pique against the Queen, who had been snubbing Alençon's particular friend, Sussex.

To shew, however, that Oxford and Alençon, with their respective attendant groups, and the contemporaneous events among which they moved, may have been simultaneously in Shakespeare's mind, is one thing ; and to reveal Oxford as, unmistakably, the historic original of Hamlet is quite another. Let us see, nevertheless, whether it cannot, quite logically and naturally, be done ; our first step being to recall precisely who was this " very gallant lad," the young Edward de Vere.

In the year 1562, William Cecil, who was to become Baron Burleigh in 1571, was living, with his family, at his mansion in the Strand, not far from the Savoy. John de Vere, sixteenth Earl of Oxford, having died during that year, there came into the Cecil household a Royal ward, Oxford's son, Edward de Vere, the seventeenth

Earl, as yet only twelve years old. Though not, as Hamlet was, a prince, this youth is a nobleman of very high degree. His ancestors—Danish it seems, by origin¹—a point memorable in connection with our story—had migrated to Normandy more than 100 years before the conquest, had taken service with Duke William, had crossed the Channel with him, and, in England, had been from the first, and were long to remain, people of great consequence, concerning whom Lord Crewe was to write gracefully, in 1626, "There is no man that hath any apprehension of gentry or nobleness but his affection stands to the continuance of so noble a name and house." The de Veres, indeed, were "The longest and most illustrious line of nobles that England has seen" (Macaulay), and the Victorian era, with Tennyson himself as its mouthpiece, was to cite "the caste of Vere de Vere" as the accepted symbol of a most exclusive aristocratic pride.

This boy, moreover, by right of lineage, and hereditary claim, holds office that brings him very near to the person of Elizabeth. He is Lord Great Chamberlain of England, entitled, as such, to singular privileges, at royal coronations and the like, including the holding of the canopy over her crowned head, and the bearing, before his Queen, of the sword of state, as you may see in the newly discovered, and charming, picture, opposite to page 192 of Capt. Ward's book.

Princely, then, if no actual prince, is this young peer, thus brought into the household of Queen Elizabeth's Secretary of State. A constant and

¹"Some Account of the Family of De Vere, Earls of Oxford," p. 5, by the Rev. S. A. A. Majendie. I have not yet been able to trace Mr. Majendie's authority for this important statement.

intimate frequenter of the royal palaces, and often in personal attendance upon the sovereign, he acquires readily enough the complete equipment of the Elizabethan courtier—jousting, shooting, sword-play, riding, music, jesting, flattery, and all the kindred arts that conduce to the captivating of court ladies, including the highest lady in the land; “for the Queen’s majesty delighteth more in his personage and his dancing and valiantness than any other.” After Oxford has greatly distinguished himself at tournament, “far above the expectation of the world,” George Delves writes to the Earl of Rutland (June, 1571), “There is no man of life and agility of every respect in the Court but the Earl of Oxford.”¹ In the words of Queen Gertrude, in *Hamlet*, metaphorically read, he is,

Our chiefest courtier, cousin and our son

or, in *Ophelia’s* phrase—who also is coming into our story—

The glass of fashion and the mould of form.

Even to his clothing, and style of dress, this parallel holds; for Oxford, quite evidently, is a bit of a dandy, since in the first four years of his wardship, he ran up, with his tailors, bills of over £600, which represents, in purchasing power, something like £5,000 of modern money; this somewhat eccentric and fantastic taste in dress, expressing, naturally, a certain corresponding exuberance and eccentricity of character, which is pilloried, no doubt, in the well-known lampoon, by Gabriel Harvey, almost certainly aimed at Oxford:—

¹ Ward’s “Oxford,” p. 60.

70 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

A little apish hat, couched fast to the pate, like an oyster,

French cambric ruffs,¹ deep with a witness, starched to the purpose.

Delicate in speech; quaint in array; conceited in all points;

In courtly guiles, a passing singular odd man.

Already Ophelia has been mentioned; and the lady who, it seems, is, in part, her prototype very soon appears; for in 1571, as we have seen, Oxford married Burleigh's eldest daughter, Anne Cecil, a girl of fifteen, formerly betrothed to Philip Sidney—a union fore-doomed from the first, since the young earl's impatient and head-strong spirit chafes beneath the bonds of domesticity, his father-in-law's critical scrutiny, and at the mournful yet inevitable discovery of the idealist, that to retain, and to render constantly, the affection of a young girl—and how much more so of a mighty queen—is far less easy than to win it.

Already obvious parallels with the Hamlet story will be present to the reader's mind. Oxford, though no prince, is young and princely, in high favour at court, and in close relationship with his country's principal minister, his own guardian, Burleigh, the Polonius of the play, whose portrait, in the National Portrait Gallery,² is, unquestionably, that of the garrulous Secretary of State, upon whom Hamlet loved to exercise his

¹ Oxford evidently aped the French fashion. cf. the lines from Chapman's "Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy"—almost certainly aimed at Oxford: "And makes them apish strangers where they dwell."

² Mr. William Poel tells me that, when producing Hamlet, it has long been his custom to use that portrait as his guide for dressing and making-up Polonius.

caustic wit. Burleigh and Shakespeare seem to have made contact with one another in the early fifteen nineties if not before ; and Shakespeare, it seems, first met Southampton about 1590, at which time Burleigh was scheming a marriage between Southampton and Burleigh's own granddaughter, Lady de Vere, daughter to the Earl of Oxford, by Anne Cecil ; Mr. Acheson holding¹ that Queen Elizabeth's visit to Cowdray, in 1591, was arranged in furtherance of this match ; that Shakespeare's early sonnets were written to advocate it ; and that the plot of " Love's Labour's Lost,"² as first written, is based upon that visit.

The validity of these conclusions I cannot discuss here ; but this much is certain, that Southampton, to the great wrath of Elizabeth, and of Burleigh, married, not Lady de Vere, but Elizabeth Vernon, Essex's cousin, an alliance which, naturally, brought Shakespeare, as an ally of Southampton, nearer to the Essex party, and alienated him correspondingly from the court, and from Burleigh ; a fact that helps to account for the dramatist's willingness to satirize the Minister, in the guise of King Claudius' first Counsellor of State. Two traits of character, common to Burleigh and Polonius, are the jocoseness to which Macaulay calls attention in his essay,³ and a readiness to employ secret agents and spies.⁴ Laertes also slips, quite naturally,

¹ " Shakespeare's Sonnet Story," p. 22 et seq.

² The originals of " Love's Labour's Lost " are a group historically allied to those of " Twelfth Night," the Princess of France being Alençon's sister.

³ " Burleigh and his Times." " To the last Burleigh was somewhat jocose, and some of his sportive sayings have been recorded by Bacon."

⁴ Acheson's " Sonnet Story," p. 527, note 1. " For several years preceding Essex's death, he and his associates had constantly to be on guard against Cecil's spies and informers.

into his place in the picture, in the person of Burleigh's son, Thomas Cecil, who, at the time of Oxford's entry into the household, was already established at Paris. It is interesting to note that the maxims bestowed upon him by his father, before departure, resemble the advice given by Polonius to Laertes—a significant fact, when we remember that the Minister's exhortation is borrowed, in parts, almost verbatim from the *Euphues* of John Lyly, Oxford's Secretary, and, for a while, the manager of his player "Boys." Thomas Cecil, however, is not, in my judgment, the sole original for Laertes, any more than Anne Cecil is the only prototype of Ophelia. The second originals of these two characters will be mentioned later on ; but, as regards the obvious connection between Ophelia and Anne, I may point out here that, although Hamlet does not marry Ophelia, the Queen's own words, spoken over the girl's dead body—

I hoped thou should'st have been my Hamlet's
wife—

seem to shew that their marriage had been expected at court, while the strained relations between the young pair, and between Oxford and his father-in-law, are reflected in the corresponding relations between Polonius, Ophelia, and the Prince. Furthermore, Hamlet's mental attitude towards women—one of wistfully ideal reverence and affection, in the abstract, shattered into distrust and disillusionment, by intensely painful experience—is repeated, almost exactly, in De Vere's poetry—his verses upon "Woman's Changeableness," in particular, breathing, in this respect, the very spirit of Hamlet, through and through.

If women could be fair and yet not fond,
Or that their love were firm not fickle, still
I would not marvel that they make men bond,
By service long to purchase their goodwill ;
But when I see how frail these creatures are,
I muse that men forget themselves so far . . .
Yet for disport we fawn and flatter both,
To pass the time when nothing else can please,
And train them to our lure with subtle oath,
Till, weary of their wiles, ourselves we ease ;
And then we say, when we their fancy try,
To play with fools, O what a fool was I.

Set now, against these lines, Hamlet's phrase, "Frailty, thy name is woman" ; "(brief) as woman's love" ; and this, to Ophelia, "Marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them" : add to the list Ophelia's bitter mourning over the lost "honey of his music vows," and the parallel is made so close as to carry conviction.

We have seen, however, in other instances—such as Anjou and Alençon, as joint counterparts of Orsino ; and La Môle and Simier as the co-originators of Viola—that Shakespeare frequently composed both the life-story, and the personal characteristics of one character in a play, from two principal sources ; and I was therefore, not surprised to chance, in Capt. Ward's "Oxford,"¹ upon another woman who may have stood, in part, for Ophelia ; the less so because I had long felt that Oxford's relations with Anne Cecil, so far as we know them, never, for one instant reflect that idealized, wistfully romantic affection that Hamlet unquestionably, felt for, and had

¹ pp. 227 et seq.

74 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

received from, Ophelia. For relations so tender we must look to another prototype than Anne; and we have not to look very far.

Early in March, 1582, young Oxford, always inclined to be headstrong, and swift to violence, when roused, fell foul of one Thomas Knyvet, a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, concerning "the quarrel of Bessie Bavisar," and in the tussle which followed, "My Lord of Oxford . . . was hurt, which grieved the Lord Treasurer so much the more that the Earle hath company with his wife since Christmas."

Now it seems that the author of these words, the Rev. Richard Madox, when on March 3, 1582, he wrote "Bessie Bavisar," may have meant Anne Vavasour, who had evidently fallen in love with Oxford, as the following verses, from a MS. in the Bodleian Library, very clearly shew.

VERSES MADE BY THE EARLE OF OXFORDE¹

Sittinge alone upon my thoughte, in melancholy
moode,

In sighte of sea, and at my back an ancyente hoarye
woode,

I saw a faire young lady come, her secret feares to
wayle,

Cladd all in colour of a Nun and covered with a
vaylle :

Yet (for the day was callme and cleere) I myghte
discerne her face,

As one myghte see a damaske rose hid under christall
glasse :

Three tymes with her softe hand full harde on her
left syde she knocks,

¹ Ward's "Oxford," p. 228.

And syghes so sore as myghte have movde som pittye
in the rockes :

From syghes, and shedding amber teares, into sweete
songe she brake,

When thus the Echo answered her to everye word she
spake :

ANN VAVESOR'S ECCHO

O heavens, who was ye first that bredd in me this
feavere ? *Vere.*

Whoe was the firste that gave ye wounde whose
fearre I ware for evere ? *Vere.*

What tyrant, Cupid, to mye harme usurpes thy golden
quivere ? *Vere.*

What wighte first caughte this harte, and can from
bondage it deliver ? *Vere.*

Yet who doth most adore this wighte, oh hollowe
caves tell true ? *You.*

What nymphe deserve his lykinge best, yet doth in
sorrow rue ? *You.*

What makes him not rewarde good will with some
rewarde or ruthe ? *Youth.*

May I his favour matche with love, if he my love
will trye ? *I.*

May I requite his birthe with faythe ? than faithfull
will I dy ? *I.*

And I that knew this ladye well,

Said Lord how great a mirakle

To he[a]r how eccho toulde the truthe

As true as Phoebus orakle.

Now these verses, charming in themselves, and an
admirable example of Oxford's powers, as the
leading courtier-poet of his time, are of doubly
enthraling interest when the reader realizes, as
he may well have done, even by a first perusal of
them, that, as the following parallels show, this

76 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

poem seems to form the basis of the duologues between Polonius and Ophelia, in *Hamlet* ii. 1, and between Hamlet and Ophelia in iii. 1., with a direct suggestion of the songs in Ophelia's mad scenes as well.

OXFORD.

Sitting alone upon my thoughte

I saw a faire young lady come
Her secret feares to wayle.

Cladd all in colour of a Nun &
Covered with a vaylle.

(Here the "vaylle" motive is twice paralleled in the play—once by Hamlet's assumed madness, and again by Ophelia's own words: "He seemed to find his way without his eyes.")

I myghte discern his face.

As one myghte see a damaske
rose hid under cristall glasse.

Three times with her soft hand.

And syghed so sore as myghte
have movde som pittye in
the rockes.

From syghes and shedding
amber teares, into sweete
song she brake.

Who was ye first that bredd in
me this feavere? *Vere.*

What nymphe deserves his
lykinge best, yet doth in sorrow
rue? *You.*

What makes him not reward
good will with some rewarde
or ruthe!

Lord how great a mirakle
To he[a]r how eccho toulde the
truthe.

SHAKESPEARE.

OPHE. Sewing in my closet.

(*Ham.* ii. 1)

OPHE. He comes before me.

POL. Mad for thy love.

OPHE. My Lord, I do not know,
But truly I do fear it.

HAM. Get thee to a nunnery,
go. (*Ham.* iii. 1)

OPHE. He falls to such perusal
of my face. (*Ham.* ii. 1)

OPHE. The rose of the fair
state . . . the glass of
fashion. (*Ham.* iii. 1)

OPHE. He took me by the
wrist, and thrice his
head thus waving up
and down . . .
(*Ham.* ii. 1)

OPHE. He raised a sigh so
piteous and profound.

OPHE. I cannot choose but
weep.

(cf. also Ophelia's songs in
Ham. iv. 5)

HAM. Would'st thou be a
breeder of sinners?
(*Ham.* iii. 1)

HAM. Nymph, in thy
orisons . . .

OPHE. I of ladies most deject
& wretched.

(*Ham.* iii. 1)

HAM. If thou dost marry, I'll
give thee this plague
for thy dowry . . .

HAM. We are arrant knaves
all; believe none of
us. (*Ham.* iii. 1)

That this tenderly scornful lyric by Oxford, upon Anne Vavasour's love-affair with him, expresses, with surprising accuracy, in turn of phrase, idea, image, and incident, the psychology of the Ophelia scenes of "Hamlet," seems to me to be an unescapable conclusion ; and if the Prince of Denmark's identity with Oxford be also accepted, then his furious outburst to Ophelia :—

I say that we will have no more marriages : those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go !—

reflects the bitter disillusionment of a young man already married, unhappily, to Anne Cecil ; and, at that moment, indignant against matrimony in general.¹ It seems to follow that Shakespeare, when he wrote the Ophelia scenes, either had that poem before him, or in memory ; or was fully acquainted with the man by whom it was written, and the circumstances with which it is concerned.

Considering the probability of Shakespeare's obtaining possession of, and acquiring permission to use, the poem, and the letter, above quoted from ; or the possibility of his being sufficiently intimate with the persons indicated, and closely enough informed concerning the events with which they deal, to account logically for these most remarkable parallels, it is, perhaps, pertinent to remember that Shakespeare, from his earliest years in London, as actor and playwright, was closely connected with the family of the Earl of Derby, which was also upon intimate terms

¹ Towards the end of 1591 Oxford married his second wife, Elizabeth Trentham.

78 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

with the de Veres. Moreover, Southampton, Shakespeare's friend and patron, followed Oxford, as royal ward in Burleigh's household ; and although, as we have seen, the project of marriage, in 1590, between Southampton and Burleigh's grand-daughter, fell through, to Burleigh's great disgust, the girl was married, ultimately, at Greenwich, on January 6, 1595, in presence of the Queen and court, and " with great solemnity and triumph,"¹ to William Stanley, 6th Earl of Derby, who had recently come into the title, the play performed for the occasion, by the Lord Chamberlain's company, being, probably, "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*." Soon after the wedding, Oxford stayed with the newly married couple at their house in Cannon Row.²

The tracing out of family connections between the Cecils, the Stanleys, and the de Veres will, however, take us too far from the main course of our argument ; and now, for the purpose of bringing out a few more of the many remaining parallels between the Earl and the Prince we must return to the early days of Oxford's married life, and take, nearly in chronological order, some incidents, and revealed traits of character, opinion, and belief, that bear recognizably upon the *Hamlet* play.

An important subject to consider, is religion ; and nobody, I suppose, will challenge my premise, which is, that Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, though neither a very orthodox nor devout Roman

¹ Lansdowne MSS. 76, quoted Ward, p. 318.

² I advance these ideas for consideration ; but attach little importance to them. My conviction is that Shakespeare had the poem and the letter before him when he wrote the play, and was fully informed concerning the circumstances in which they were written, and the persons of whom it treated.

Catholic, was, beyond question, Catholic in tendency. His speech, in i. 4., to the Ghost, beginning—

Angels and ministers of grace defend us—

with its reference to “airs from heaven and blasts from hell,” and to “canonized bones,” together with the rapping out, in Ham. iii. 2, of so Roman an oath as, “’S’blood ; do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe ?” afford convincing proofs, which can be fortified by reference to William Poel’s article upon the subject, in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of May 3, 1913.

If, then, our analogy is to hold, we shall expect to find that Edward de Vere’s mind had a pro-Catholic bias ; and so it had, undoubtedly, during the years with which we are here concerned. De Vere, however, was not, it seems, brought up as a papist. His father, the 16th Earl, according to Capt. B. M. Ward, was of the Reformed Church,¹ and seems to have educated his son in that faith ; one of his tutors being his Protestant uncle, Arthur Golding, who, just before Oxford’s marriage (December, 1571), in a dedication to Oxford of a translation of Calvin’s version of the Psalms of David, “made a last effort to influence his pupil in the direction of Puritanism,” a cause which the young lord’s marriage into Burleigh’s Protestant household undoubtedly furthered. Oxford, however, once free of parental influences, can never have been, at heart, a convinced Protestant. Strongly feudal in temperament, and the inheritor of a great historic name,

¹ The Rev. S. A. A. Majendie, in his *Account of the Family of De Vere*, states, on the contrary, that the 16th Earl was of “the old religion” ; an idea which is supported by the distinctly Roman tendency of the Ghost’s speeches in “Hamlet.”

his Catholic tendencies, secret or open, were, probably, as strong as those of other great lords, whose ancient lineage bound them to conservatism ; and the execution, in January, 1572, of his cousin, the Duke of Norfolk, for complicity in the Catholic plot, to put Mary Queen of Scots upon the throne of England, must have entered as iron into the soul of Oxford, who had plotted vainly for Norfolk's escape.

That event, in all probability, sickened him, at heart, of Protestantism ; and when the negotiations develop, for the Queen's marriage with the Catholic Alençon, Oxford, and his friend, Sussex, both favour the match. According to J. R. Green, the Jesuit missionaries in England played some part in bringing the young Earl within their fold ; for we read,¹ "The list of nobles reconciled to the old faith by these wandering apostles was headed by the name of Lord Oxford, Cecil's son-in-law, and the proudest among English peers." At bottom, however, this proudest of English peers, though with sufficiently pronounced a bent towards Romanism, to account wholly for the same tendencies observable in Shakespeare's Hamlet, was, like Hamlet himself, less orthodox than from surface appearances, one might suppose. The side of the Renaissance that really held him was not religious, but æsthetic. Letters, poetry, drama, music—among these rather than at church, or in court the real Oxford moved and had his being ; and among these will be found the clues to his mystery. All such culture, more than any other courtier of his day, he loved ; and Oxford's preface to Clarke's translation of Castiglione's

¹ "A Short History of the English People," cap. vii, p. 499.

"The Courtier," was, says Capt. Ward, the first recorded occasion of an English nobleman "taking immense pains to recommend a book in which he is interested." Literature, and its co-related art, the drama, were to become the absorbing interests of his life.

Another characteristic, in which Oxford strongly resembled Hamlet, was his restlessness, and the form of *Welt-schmerz* that begets a yearning for "infinite space." To its prince, Denmark was "a prison"; to Oxford, the English court is equally "a nutshell"; yet there was commotion at Whitehall when it became known that, without permission asked, "My Lord of Oxford and Lord Seymour are fled out of England, and passed by Bruges to Brussels."¹ The truants were soon back again; but "the desire of travel is not yet quenched in him"²; and on January 7, 1575, having obtained, at last, the Queen's permission, he left London for Paris, met the French King Henry III there, and proceeded to tour France, Germany and Italy, this being the journey referred to by Chapman, in "The Revenge of Bussy" (iii. 4).

CLER. I overtook, coming from Italy,
In Germany, a great and famous Earl
Of England—

a passage which, as may be seen in chapter vii, is inserted among obvious paraphrases, imitations, criticisms of, and comments upon, Shakespeare's "Hamlet," such as in my judgment, when read with its context, conclusively identify

¹ Ward's "Oxford," p. 93.

² Letter, probably by Walsingham, in Domestic State Papers. Quoted Ward, p. 97.

82 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

Hamlet and Horatio with Lord Oxford, and his cousin, Horatio de Vere.¹

Then, during Oxford's absence, there darkened upon his life a shadow that never, it seems, was completely to be lifted,² namely the circulation, throughout the court, of an accusation against Lady Oxford, purporting to come from the Earl himself, that she had borne to him an illegitimate child :—

Her Majesty . . . repeated my Lord of Oxford's answer to me, which he made openly in the presence chamber of Her Majesty, viz. that if she (Lady Oxford) come with child it was not his. I answered that it was the common answer of lusty courtiers everywhere so to say.

The individuals who, according to Capt. Ward—who makes out a good case—first circulated these slanders, were Oxford's own cousin, Lord Henry Howard, second son of the poet-Earl of Surrey, and a Catholic friend of his, Charles Arundel. Directly the scandal came to Oxford's ears, he started, in great wrath, for home, when, crossing the Channel, his ship was attacked by pirates, and all his goods stolen—an incident that reappears in *Hamlet* iv. 6, wherein the First Sailor hands to Horatio a letter coming "from the ambassador that was bound for England," and telling, in Hamlet's words, how, "Ere we were two days out at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase." Minus his baggage the Earl, nevertheless, reached London in safety ; whereupon there followed much heated corres-

¹ For explanation of Chapman's concern with Shakespeare's plays, see post, pp. 240 et seq.

² Letter written to Burleigh by Dr. Richard Masters. Ward's "*Oxford*," pp. 114, 115.

pondence with the Burleigh family, resulting in Oxford's complete alienation from his wife, with whom, for a time, he ceased to live, and would not allow even to come to court. These events darkened Oxford's life with a misery that was the more poignant because he knew it to be due mainly to slanderous tongues, as Burleigh himself realized when he wrote, in July, 1576, that "unkindness in me towards him (Oxford) was grounded upon untrue reports of others, as I have manifestly proved them." That the misanthropic moods, thus induced in the young Earl, are vividly reflected in Shakespeare's play I have no doubt whatever ; whether in the bitter speeches of the Prince to Ophelia (iii. 1)—

Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go ; farewell ! Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them—

or this, to his false friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (ii. 2)

It goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth seems to me a sterile promontory—

or those pathetic closing lines (v. 2)

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me.

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.

84 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Now the opening stanza of Oxford's own poem, "Loss of Good Name" (1576), exactly echoes that mood.¹

Fram'd in the front of forlorn hope past all recovery
I stayless stand, to abide the shock of shame and
infamy.

My life, through lingering long, is lodged in lair
of loathsome ways,

My death delay'd to keep from life the harm of
hapless days.

My sprites, my heart, my wit and force, in deep
distress are drown'd ;

The only loss of my good name is of these griefs
the ground.

There remain, however, yet other lines, in the last act of Hamlet, which, in my judgment, are shaped by the actual events of Oxford's life ; for at that very time, Burleigh, in the rough draft of a letter to Oxford, dated June 12, 1576,² wrote these very significant words :

I did my best to have the jury find the death of
the poor man, whom he killed in my house, *se
defendendo.*

Now that, unquestionably, is a reference to the slaying, by Oxford, of an under-cook of Burleigh's household, Thomas Bryncknell, who, "running upon a point of the fence-sword of the said erle," was grievously hurt, and eventually died of his wound, the jury, as I gather from Burleigh's letter, returning, with some reluctance, a verdict that Oxford slew the man in self-defence, "*se defendendo.*"

¹ For Oxford as poet and dramatist, see post pp. 94-97.

² Ward's "Oxford," p. 124. Hatfield MSS. (cap. ii, 170-71).

With that question, however, we need not concern ourselves here, the important point to us being the evident connection that seems to exist between these incidents and the opening lines of the 5th act of Hamlet, wherein the two gravediggers discuss Ophelia's suicide.

FIRST CLO. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

SEC. CLO. I tell thee she is ; and therefore make her grave straight : the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

FIRST CLO. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence ?

SEC. CLO. Why, 'tis found so.

FIRST CLO. It must be " *se offendendo* " ; it cannot be else. For here lies the point : if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act ; and an act hath three branches ; it is to act, to do, to perform : argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

SEC. CLO. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

FIRST CLO. Give me leave : Here lies the water ; good : here stands the man ; good : if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes ; mark you that ; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself : argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

86 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Now all this, in my opinion, is nothing else than a twisting, by Shakespeare, to the circumstances of Ophelia's death, of the slaying of Thomas Bryncknell by Oxford (Hamlet) in the house of Burleigh (Polonius); for just as Burleigh, quite evidently, from his letter, was in doubt whether the cook, by attacking Oxford, and running upon his sword, slew himself, thus permitting Oxford successfully to plead self-defence, "*se defendendo*," so the two clowns are doubtful whether the woman went to the water, and drowned herself—"*se offendendo*"—or whether, on the contrary, the water having gone to her, and drowned her (i.e., an accident), she could not rightly be held guilty of her own death. Further, this passage :—

SEC. CLO. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

FIRST CLO. Why, there thou say'st, and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

SEC. CLO. Was he a gentleman?—

reflects, in my judgment, whispers and surmises that must have been heard in Burleigh's kitchen, and beyond it, as to what form the jury's verdict might have taken, had Bryncknell been the Earl, Oxford the menial, and Ophelia, shall we say, a

scullery-maid. This episode seems to afford further proof that Anne Cecil stood, in part, for Ophelia in Shakespeare's imagination, and that, however strongly aristocratic were his deeper sympathies, the dramatist had in mind, at the time, the ancient saw :

When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman ?

This episode of Thomas Bryncknell, however, is not the only sword-play incident, in Oxford's life, that links itself with the story of Hamlet and Ophelia ; for on March 17, 1582, Faunt wrote to Anthony Bacon¹ :—

In England of late there hath been a fray between my Lord of Oxford and Master Thomas Knyvet of the Privy Chamber, who are both hurt, but my Lord of Oxford more dangerously. You know Master Knyvet is not meanly beloved in Court, and therefore he is not likely to speed ill whatsoever the quarrel be :—

and a fortnight earlier, on March 3 of the same month, the Rev. Richard Madox had inserted a note in his diary :—

My Lord of Oxford fought with Master Knyvet about the quarrel of Bessie Bavisar, and was hurt, which grieved the Lord Treasurer so much the more for that the Earl hath company with his wife since Christmas.

Now it is possible, according to Capt. Ward, that when Madox wrote " Bessie Bavisar," he may have been confusing the name with that of Anne Vavasour, the Queen's Maid of Honour, to whom

¹ Ward's " Oxford," p. 227.

we have already seen Oxford writing verses strangely reminiscent of the Ophelia duologues of Hamlet ; and Thomas Knyvet, therefore, may, possibly, have been another, and rival, aspirant for Anne's favours. We do not know ; but the whole episode, culminating in a duel, in which both combatants were hurt, and bringing in, not only the historic original of Polonius, but also the originals of one, at least (Anne Cecil), if not both of the historic prototypes of Ophelia, certainly has a Laertes flavour about it. In this connection, it is very interesting further to note, that, on January 19, 1585, a certain Thomas Vavasour sent Oxford a challenge¹ in the form of "a lewd letter,"² of which the following is a part :

I speak this that I fear thou art so much wedded to that shadow of thine, that nothing can have force to awake thy base and sleepy spirits. Is not the revenge taken of thy victims sufficient,³ but wilt thou yet use unworthy instruments to provoke my unwilling mind. Or dost thou fear thyself, and therefore hast sent thy forlorn kindred, whom as thou hast left nothing to inherit so thou dost thrust them violently into thy shameful quarrels ? . . . but if there be any spark of honour left in thee, or iota of regard of thy decayed reputation, use not thy birth for an excuse, for I am a gentleman, but meet me thyself alone and thy lackey to hold thy horse. For the weapons, I leave them to thy choice for that I challenge. . . .

¹ Ward's "Oxford," p. 229.

² Ibid. p. 229. The document is endorsed "A lewd letter from Vavasour to the Earl of Oxford."

³ Capt. Ward's note. "A reference to the just revenge Lord Oxford took on Lord Henry Howard and Charles Arundel in December, 1583." Both of them had scandalously slandered the Earl.

Much of this letter, even to the wording, comes strangely close to the Laertes story ; that "shadow of thine" recalling Hamlet's "wounded name," and the phrase, "wilt thou yet use worthy instruments to provoke my unwilling mind?" needing but very little manipulation to fit it in exactly with the plot propounded to Laertes, by King Claudius (*Ham.*, iv. 7), to take advantage of Hamlet's generosity, and his "freedom from contriving," for the use against him of such unworthy instruments as the poisoned blade and cup. Such easy transpositions of historic fact, moreover, are precisely those which we have already seen Shakespeare using, in the Anne Vavasour poem, and the affair of Thomas Bryncknell. I feel confident, therefore, that, just as Ophelia is Anne Cecil-cum-Anne Vavasour, so Laertes is Thomas Cecil, with Thomas Knyvet and Thomas Vavasour contributing.

The individual who comes upon the stage with Hamlet, at the conclusion of the duologue between the grave-diggers, which we were discussing a few pages back, is Horatio, whose historic identity it is now time to consider. He, in common with the other principal characters of the play, slips, quite naturally, into his place in the story, Capt. Ward's book again helping us ; for we learn therein that, after the crisis of 1576, which so deeply stained Oxford's name, and decided him to live no longer with his wife—for whom he arranged separate maintenance—the individuals whom he attempted, though unsuccessfully, to make his successors in the Earldom,¹ were his two favourite cousins, Horatio and Francis de Vere, of whom the former, without

¹ Ward's "Oxford," pp. 126, 127.

90 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

change of name, stands, almost certainly, for Hamlet's friend, the man chosen by the Prince to tell his story, and to

Report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Horatio was not merely the foremost soldier of his day, and first of "the fighting Veres"—just the kind of destiny to which Oxford, apart from his literary proclivities, aspired—but was also, in character, precisely what Hamlet (iii. 2) describes Horatio as being—

One in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;
A man that fortunes buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks : and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please—

for, as we learn further from "Fuller's Worthies," Horatio de Vere was a military leader possessing

More meekness and as much valour as his
brother (Francis). As for his temper it was true
of him what is said of the Caspian Sea, that it
doth never ebb nor flow, observing a constant tenor
neither elated nor depressed . . . returning from
a victory (in) silence . . . in retreat (with) cheer-
fulness of spirit.¹

If any reader be still sceptical, concerning the historical identity of Horatio, I refer him to

¹ Francis de Vere is, no doubt, the Francisco of the play, Marcellus and Bernardo being probably Prince Maurits and Barnevelt, companions-in-arms of Horatio de Vere in the Low Countries. Their filling of his place may be echoed in "For this relief much thanks" (*Ham.* i. i) Barnevelt appears as Barnefield in the German version of *Hamlet* (Hamburg, 1778). Dr. C. P. Gunning in *Hackney Gazette*, June 8, 1923.

Chapter VII of this book, wherein, as I think, he will find unmistakably linked together the personalities of the Earl of Oxford and Horatio de Vere, in a play that, almost throughout, is a running commentary upon Shakespeare's Hamlet. Our last few pages have included many references to, and quotations from, the last act of Hamlet. In that connection it is interesting to remember that—as also in the first act of the play—the Prince of Denmark wears traditionally, upon the stage, “the trappings and the suits of woe,” symbols appositely, though unconsciously suggestive of winter's darkness and storm, for which, originally, the figure of Hamlet stood. Those “trappings,” however, seem to have an Elizabethan, as well as an antique origin, for in this very year, 1576, the darkest of Oxford's life, we find him writing :—

A crown of bays shall that man wear
That triumphs over me ;
For black and tawny will I wear,
Which mourning colours be.¹

Mr. Ashurst Majendie's statement—of which, however, I have not yet been able to obtain confirmation—that the De Veres were Danes by origin, was quoted at the opening of this chapter ; and every reader of the play knows that its action takes place mainly at Elsinore, in which town the Prince speaks of Denmark as “a prison,” and complains, to Rosencrantz, of his “lack of advancement,” a phrase which, under Burleigh's pen, in a letter written to Oxford in the autumn of 1588, becomes “lack of preferment.” This

¹ Ward's “Oxford,” p. 141. The lines seem to refer to Oxford's failure to obtain the Laureateship.

Elsinore motive, in common with all the other central motives of the tragedy, seems to be drawn directly from contemporary history ; it being in 1582 that Oxford's brother-in-law, Lord Willoughby de Eresby—who, it seems, had been partially concerned with Oxford in the matter of the fray with Knyvett—was entrusted, by the Queen, with an important diplomatic mission, namely a journey to Elsinore, for the purpose of investing King Frederick II with the Order of the Garter. This duty Lord Willoughby duly performed, thereby, as seems probable, providing Shakespeare with a hint for the setting of his tragedy, and, in an autograph "*Relation*"¹ of the embassy, supplying details which recognizably re-appear in the play, as, for example—

This being done we royally feasted, and the King (had) all the ordnance of the castle given us. And we, demanding again the oath and protestation to be answerable to that favour and honour he had received from Her Majesty, he promised this instrument which we have delivered, accompanied with many affectionate and loving speeches to Her Majesty and all of the Order—

all of which seems to me to be curiously reminiscent of the very atmosphere of Hamlet i. 2 ; Laertes' words, to the King of Denmark—

That duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France—
being—with the sole substitution of the word England—such actual phrase as Willoughby himself might have spoken on that occasion, while his expression, "demanding again the oath

¹ Cotton MSS. Titus, cvii. 226.

and protestation to be answerable to that favour and honour he had received from Her Majesty," is also reflected in the Queen's plea, that follows in the same scene of Shakespeare's play—

Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.

Further, the conclusion of Willoughby's record, with its references to the "loving speeches to her Majesty," the "royal feast," and the "volley of all the great shot of the castle," re-appears, versified, yet almost verbatim, in Shakespeare's next lines :—

HAM. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

KING. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.

Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam
come ;

This gentle and unforced accord of
Hamlet

Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks
to-day,

But the great cannon to the clouds shall
tell,

And the king's rouse the heaven shall
bruit again,

Re-speaking earthly thunder.

Even those "draughts of Rhenish" subsequently drained by the King, and referred to by Hamlet (i. 4), after more trumpeting and ordnance—

HOR. What does this mean, my lord ?

HAM. The king doth wake to-night, and takes
his rouse,

Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-
spring reels ;

HAM. And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish
 down,
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray
 out
 The triumph of his pledge—

prove, upon investigation, to be recorded also in authentic history ; for, during the second mission to the King of Denmark, in 1585, T. Tennecker, writing from Elsinore to Sir F. Walsingham, says :—

The King was then at Anderskøwe, about 15 leagues from Elsinore, where he was “ minded ” to entertain the English ambassadors, “ with him all the winter,” with “ no lack of Rhenish wine.”¹

But it is now time to turn, for a moment, from Oxford the courtier, to Oxford the man-of-letters, and of the theatre. That Hamlet was interested in literature, and especially in dramatic literature, there is, it will be admitted, abundant evidence in the play. The prince's intention, openly expressed in ii. 2, to “ set down,” and insert in “ The Mouse Trap ” a speech “ of some dozen or sixteen lines,” excites no comment from the First Player, who, apparently, accepts quite as a matter of course, his patron's proposed addition to the text ; and Hamlet's obvious familiarity with the art of acting, and with its exponents in Denmark, is common knowledge wherever the English language is spoken. Now all these characteristics of Hamlet find their counterpart in Oxford, who, as Capt. Ward shews conclusively, was the leader of the Euphuistic literary group of his time, as against Sir Philip

¹ State Papers Office, Denmark, vol. i. Quoted Col. B. R. Ward, in *Hackney Spectator*, Jan. 19th, 1923.

Sidney, with Spenser seconding him, at the head of the Romantic party. In 1579, Munday dedicated his "Mirror of Mutability" to Lord Oxford, and in 1580 Lyly inscribed the second part of his "Euphues" to the same Earl, to whose household, along with Munday, he seems to have been, at this time, attached. Gabriel Harvey had written of Oxford, in 1578, "how greatly thou dost excel in letters," and William Webbe, in 1586, describing him among the courtiers most skilful "in the rare devices of poetry," states, further, that the Earl of Oxford "may challenge to himself the title of the most excellent among the rest."

Nor is it of Oxford's merely academic skill, in letters alone, that contemporary evidence exists. Hamlet's gift of effectively mocking insolence, and irony, such as he uses against Polonius, and others, was one that Oxford also possessed; for it was of the Earl that Nashe wrote to Gabriel Harvey, in 1580:—

You accuse him (Lyly) to have (greatly) incensed the Earl of Oxford against you. Mark him well; he is but a little fellow, but he hath one of the best wits in England. Should he take thee in hand again (as he flieth from such inferior concertation) I prophecy there would more gentle readers die of a merry mortality engendered by the eternal jests he would maul thee with, than there have done of this last infection.¹

There is Hamlet, the prince, with his princely privilege of mockery,² as well as of praise and patronage; and as for his practical acquaintance-

¹ Ward's "Oxford," pp. 178-205.

² Hamlet to the players (ii. 2.) "Look you mock him not." (i.e. *Polonius*).

ship with players, we know that, in 1580, the Earl of Warwick's company of actors was transferred to Lord Oxford's service, with John Lyly, it seems, as their manager,¹ the whole of Lyly's eight plays being written while he was in Oxford's service, and perhaps, as Capt. Ward surmises, with Oxford's active and practical collaboration,² since Lyly appears to have written no more plays, after leaving Oxford's service, some time between 1590 and 1594. Capt. Ward also brings evidence to shew that both the Earl and his private secretary, about this time, were in close touch with another company of players, namely the Queen's. Concerning Oxford's own individual abilities, as a playwright, we have Lord Lumley's words naming among those that "do deserve the highest price (? praise) : the Earl of Oxford and Master Edwards of Her Majesty's chapel for Comedy and Enterlude"³ ; and Francis Meres, statement in *Palladis Thymia*, 1598, "The best for comedy among us be Edward Earl of Oxford."

Lastly, in this connection, Capt. Ward's assiduity has revealed the important fact that, from 1586 until the end of his life, Oxford received from the Queen a pension of £1,000 a year, equivalent to some £12,000 a year of our money, and asks, very pertinently, for what purpose a monarch notoriously parsimonious, bestowed so large an annuity upon an aforetime spendthrift young nobleman, if not in the expectation of valuable services to be rendered by him in return ? What those services were has not

¹ Ward's "Oxford," p. 264.

² *Ibid.* p. 274.

³ *The Arts of English Poesie*, 1589.

yet been definitely ascertained ; but I agree wholly with Capt. Ward that the provision, by Oxford, of such dramatic entertainments as Majesty might approve, was, probably, a part of the bargain ; and, standing, the other day, before that once magnificent old mansion, at Hackney, Brooke House, in which, under its then name of King's Place, the Earl of Oxford lived, from 1596, until his death in 1604—the same year in which appeared that first authentic edition of Hamlet, known as the second quarto—I wished that those venerable stones, being given tongues, would solve the mystery. Gazing, rather wistfully, upon the fallen splendour of Brooke House, past which were speeding, with appalling clang and clamour, interminable lines of motor omnibuses and electric trams, this fact was strongly present to my mind—that, almost exactly two and a half miles to the south-west of King's Place, as the crow flies, to the north of old London Wall, there stood, in Shoreditch, beside Curtain Road, as it is now named, James Burbage's theatre, and its rival, The Curtain, in which many of Shakespeare's, and other contemporary plays, including, probably the comedies of Oxford, must first have been presented to Elizabethan theatre-goers. Is it fanciful to suppose that this courtier dramatist, who—as I have, I hope, here conclusively shewn—stands in history as the prototype of Hamlet, was guided, in part at least, to his choice of King's Place for a home, by its proximity to the playhouses, in which his æsthetic imagination, and his sympathy with the dramatic art, and with its exponents, found satisfaction and scope ?

Brooke House, by an unhappy stroke of des-

98 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

tiny, that reflects no credit upon our national intelligence, is now, in the French phrase, "*Une Maison des Aliénés*"; but, remembering Oxford's eccentricities of character, and the rôle that, right down the centuries-old saga, Hamlet the prince, has played, as a type of "antic disposition"; and bearing in mind also Claudius' comment :—

Madness in great ones must not unwatched go—
was it not, though unconsciously so, a strangely grim and apposite comment upon human vicissitude, that I read, but yesterday, roughly scrawled, in chalk, upon the side-door of Hamlet's once proud mansion :—

This is the door of the barmy house.

CHAPTER V

SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN'S "BUSSY D'AMBOIS" (ACTS I-III)

Shows that Chapman's Tragedy, "Bussy D'Ambois," dealing with a group of French characters allied to those of "Twelfth Night," may be regarded as Chapman's concealed version of that play—the first three acts of "Bussy," while containing borrowings from "Julius Cæsar," "Macbeth," and other Shakespearean plays, being, in the main, an imitation of, and running commentary upon, and criticism of, "Twelfth Night," and its characters: Chapman thus treating Shakespeare's comedy much as Jonson had done, in "Every Man Out Of His Humour."

NEITHER the origin nor the date of the first of Chapman's two "Bussy" plays has yet been determined with any accuracy. First published in 1607, "Bussy D'Ambois" seems to have received its final revision a year or two earlier; and if the play's many references to "Macbeth," which will be pointed out as we reach them, are accepted as such, that final revision may have been about the end of 1606. There were probably several revisions, the allusion to Elizabeth as an old queen, and to Bussy, as being mistaken for "a knight of the new edition," both pointing to a date after the accession of James I, and the "leap year" reference either to 1600 or to 1604, this last being the date that Sir Edmund Chambers assigns to the play.¹

¹ Chapman's Tragedies, T. M. Parrott, p. 549. "Since it was printed in 1607, the only leap year that suits the dates is 1604."

100 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

My own belief, however, is that "Bussy," in its original form, was written earlier than has been suggested above—probably in 1597-98—and that it is to Chapman's play, and no other, that the well-known entries in Henslowe's diary refer. It is, of course, possible that, as Collier supposed, those two allusions to the "Guisse" may be applied to Marlowe's tragedy, "The Massacre At Paris," but, when read with Henslowe's mention of Pero,¹ earlier in the same year, they may equally well refer to the Guise in "Bussy D'Ambois," a first version of which may have been Chapman's unnamed play, for the first three acts of which Henslowe lent him *iiii*l on January 4, 1598, followed by a similar sum on January 8, "in fulle payment for his tragedie." As for the groundwork of the story, say the authorities, Chapman drew it all from general knowledge, and from the contemporary writers, such as Brantôme, Pierre de l'Estoile, de Thou, d'Aubigné, and Marguerite de Valois, to mention merely the names that come first to one's pen.²

The commentators generally, however, have, in my judgment, failed to adduce some of the strongest available evidence for both date and subject of "Bussy D'Ambois," simply because they have not succeeded in penetrating into the play within the play, and, in consequence, have not discerned either the historical or the literary

¹ F. S. Boas, Chapman's "Bussy," *Belles Lettres Ser. Intro.* p. xii. Cf. also E. K. Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage III.* 253. Pero is a female character, and an Admiral's inventory of 1598 refers to "Perowes sewt." Chapman may have worked on a series of plays on "The Civil Wars of France," written by Dekker and others later in 1598.

² Cf. also Introduction to T. M. Parrott's edition of Chapman's plays.

circumstances with which it is, in my judgment, inextricably linked up. Dryden, presumably about the first literary critic, of any eminence, who concerned himself with "Bussy," was equally baffled; for, though amazed by its glaring colours, as seen upon the stage, he found it, in the reading, "but a cold dull mass . . . a dwarfish thought dressed up in gigantic words," and containing so much repetition, looseness of expression, gross hyperbole, and bad English, as to make "a hideous mingle of false poetry and true nonsense."

This criticism, like its subject, is a "mingle" of the true with the false; since, granting Dryden's general case, much of the thought is of more than dwarfish stature; but, after according full recognition to the admirably thorough, learned work of Drs. Boas, and T. M. Parrott and other editors, no elucidation of "Bussy D'Ambois" can, in my judgment, be other than relatively superficial, until the commentator has perceived that Chapman, almost throughout his play, is continuously hampered by the fact that he is imitating, and commenting upon, Shakespeare. The author of "Bussy," in common with his friend Jonson, possessed neither great power of creative imagination, nor much capacity to conceive characters genuinely capable of delineating, upon the stage, their own qualities, rather than those of their author, and of conveying to an audience, individually and vitally, their inmost selves. As in his most famous work, the translations from Homer, so also when constructing his plays, Chapman preferred to have the basic material supplied to him by another mind, in this case Shakespeare's—the first three acts of

"Bussy," as I shall endeavour to show, being founded mainly upon "Twelfth Night," the last two, when the comedy is merging into tragedy, upon scenes from "Hamlet" and "Macbeth"—facts which place "Bussy D'Ambois," and, as we shall see, "The Revenge of Bussy," and "The Tragedy of Biron," in my judgment, among the most interesting documents in the whole range of Elizabethan literature, as showing us, truthfully, because secretly, the honest opinion that Chapman held of Shakespeare, and of his work.

But before proceeding, as I now must, to make good these assertions, if I can, it will be well to adduce logical reasons why—far from there being anything unnatural in the existence of concealed comments upon Shakespeare, in the texts of Chapman's plays—such inter-relation is, on the contrary, exactly what, in view of our existing knowledge, we might rationally expect.

Concerning the relations between Chapman and Shakespeare very little is historically known, nor, so far as I am aware, does there exist any document of importance openly connecting the two names. In Elizabethan times, however, communication between individuals was often, and for obvious reasons, secret; and it is quite impossible to read carefully the poems and plays of these two rival poets and dramatists, without detecting, almost at once, the fact that they are at constant enmity, and that the works of each of them teem with concealed, and, for the most part, uncomplimentary allusions to the ideas and literary output of the other. Professor Minto, and, following him, Mr. Arthur Acheson, in his valuable "Shakespeare and The Rival Poet," have made it clear that the contemporary, with

whose formidable emulation, Shakespeare, in the sonnets, was so deeply concerned, was none other than George Chapman, the individual aimed at in Sonnet 86 addressed, one supposes, to Southampton :—

Was it the full proud sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew ?

Sonnets 78-86, in fact, contain many attacks upon Chapman, and so also does 21,¹ the last lines of which read thus :—

O let me, true in love, but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair
As any mother's child, though not so bright
As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air.

Let them say more that like of hearsay well ;
I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

Now that twelfth line—

As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air—
is, as Mr. Acheson has shown, almost certainly, a comment upon lines in Chapman's poem, "The Amorous Zodiac" (1595)—

If not in heaven, amongst those braving fires,
Yet here thy beauties which the world admires,
Bright as those flames shall glisten in my verse—
while the last line of Shakespeare's last-quoted sonnet—

I will not praise that purpose not to sell—

¹ This sonnet, in common with many others, is out of its place in the standard editions. It should follow No. 82, with which it is connected in subject, as well as by rhyme links. See Sir Denys Bray's "The Original Order of Shakespeare's Sonnets."

104 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

contrasts Chapman's mercenary motives, his willingness to bring his wares to market, that he may

Crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning—

with Shakespeare's sincerity, and the single-mindedness of those who, like himself,

Will not praise, that purpose not to sell.

Other such examples, from the sonnets, can be traced by any reader who has Mr. Acheson's book before him; but the one example given here is enough to hint that, from the outset of their careers, the two poets are rival, and hostile—the austere Chapman, rancorous, disgruntled, mournful, metaphysical, and intensely self-conscious, looking down with the overweening pride of his deep learning, and ponderous scholastic conceit, upon his less erudite antagonist, while Shakespeare—uncertain, as yet, whether he has to do with an inspired seer, or a befogged pedant,¹ and regarding with dubious awe one whose metaphysical attainments, he realizes, are loftier and profounder than his own—is, at the same time, genuinely amused by, and rather scornful over, the mystically involved fawnings of a compeer, “by spirits taught to write.”² Bitter rivalry between the pair—as this book, I hope, will conclusively show—continues throughout the period of their early poems,³ into that of their plays, as the reader may see by a glance at this passage, from ii. 1 of “*Love's Labour's Lost*,”

¹ Acheson's “*Shakespeare and the Rival Poet*,” p. 79.

² Sonnet 52.

³ Chapman's “*Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy*,” bitterly attacks both Shakespeare and Oxford in stanzas vi, ix, and x.

wherein the Princess of France—Marguerite de Valois, sister of that Alençon whom we have already met, in these pages, as one of the original characters of “Twelfth Night”—speaking of her own physical charm, says :—

My beauty, though but mean
Needs not the painted flourish of your praise ;
Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye,
Not utter'd by base sale of chapmen's tongues—

which last line not only reiterates the “purpose not-to-sell” theme of Sonnet 21, but identifies Chapman as the object of Shakespeare's attack by introducing also a deliberate pun upon his name, while the same scene, some fifty lines further down, sets directly against Chapman Rosaline's famous speech, in praise of Biron, who, undoubtedly, voices Shakespeare himself, “so sweet and voluble is his discourse.” Further, in the same play (iv. 3), this same Biron, speaking of the same princess, uses again, in the following couplet, words that echo those of the princess—

Fie, painted rhetoric ! O, she needs it not :
To things of sale a seller's praise belongs

wherein “painted praise” has become “painted rhetoric,” while the “sale” motive appears, unchanged, in each last line.

Continuing, that same duologue, between Biron and the king, a few lines lower down—

KING. O paradox ! Black is the badge of hell,
The hue of dungeons and the school of
night ;
And beauty's crest becomes the heavens
well.

106 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

BIRON. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits
of light—

appears to be another attack upon Chapman's cloudy, sombre and spirit-inspired metaphysics, including, almost verbatim, the title of one of Chapman's best-known poems, "The Shadow of Night," in discussing which Swinburne commented upon "the heavy and convulsive movement of its tangled and jarring sentences," and "the incessant by-play of its incongruous digressions and impenetrable allusions."¹

And now, having shown briefly, yet, I hope, conclusively, the permanent, and fundamental, literary antagonism between the sunny-souled, honey-tongued Shakespeare, so wholly of "The School of Day," and cloud-wrapped, moon-struck Chapman, avowed disciple of "The School of Night," we can take up, once more, the thread of our argument concerning the connection between "Bussy D'Ambois" and certain Shakespearean plays, hoping that, in the light of what has gone before, we shall find Chapman's "incongruous digressions" less incongruous, and more purposeful, than Swinburne did, and those "impenetrable allusions" not quite so bewildering, after all, as their first perusal might lead us to suppose.

Jonson's vast indebtedness to "Twelfth Night" in "Every Man Out of His Humour" and in "The Silent Woman" I showed in my

¹ It seems almost certain that "Troilus and Cressida," written in 1598, the year of a revised version of "Love's Labour's Lost," was an attack by Shakespeare upon Chapman's glorification, in his translation of Homer, of the men, women and morals of ancient Greece. Chapman may be, in part, the Thersites of that play, as he was probably also, in part, the Holofernes of "Love's Labour's Lost."

last book. What more natural, then, that his close friend, of the University school, Chapman, should also try his hand upon the same play, "Twelfth Night," at almost the same time, with a view of emulating, if he might, the most popular dramatist of his age, and the rival with whom—if I read the Sonnets aright—he had been competing desperately for Southampton's favour. This, I think, is a reasonable supposition; and it is supported by the fact that, supposing these two deliberate imitations of "Twelfth Night," by the two leading dramatists of the school of writers rival to Shakespeare, to have been done, almost coincidentally, in 1599, their appearance fits in with Henslowe's entries, relative to a Bussy play. "Bussy D'Ambois" was, in my judgment, broadly speaking, Chapman's version of "Twelfth Night," just as "Every Man Out of His Humour" was Jonson's: both being written while Shakespeare's comedy, in a revised form, was still fresh, in memory, and immensely popular with the play-going public.¹

Another reason why the commentators have failed to grasp the inwardness of "Bussy," is, that they have neither seen the Elizabethan plays in their true shapes, as something approximating to topical revues, nor observed—as I have already shewn in chapter one—that "Twelfth Night," in common with "Bussy," is based upon historical events, and depicts, beneath transparent disguises, great personages in the courts of France and of England, before and after the year of St.

¹ Modern playwrights imitate one another in a very similar way, though modern copyright laws prevent actual plagiarism. *Vide* the crime and crook plays that overrun the West-End stage to-day.

Bartholomew, 1572.¹ Chapman was well aware of all this; and, like other dramatists of his own day, as of ours, wanted to be in the topical running. He remained so; for "*Bussy D'Ambois*," of whom, nominally, at any rate, his play treats, flourished during the seventies, and was assassinated on August 18, 1579. What proportion of the spectators was astute, or informed, enough to perceive that, behind the historic Frenchmen depicted, were other Frenchmen, and Englishmen too—themselves characters, alike, of contemporary history, and also of "*Twelfth Night*"—remains matter for surmise; but many, it is certain, must have known the truth; and—just as, I hope, some of my readers will, henceforth, be able to do, when reading Chapman's tragedy—must have derived much of their pleasure from following the play within the play. Further, that discerning percentage, among Chapman's audiences—according to the favour or hostility with which they regarded Shakespeare—would have welcomed, or resented not merely the imitations, but also the implied, and almost open, comments, both critical and eulogistic, which, as I hope to shew, are plainly to be read in certain passages of the two "*Bussy*" plays.

Chapman's borrowings from Shakespeare are, in general, almost as obvious and easily detected as are those of Jonson; but the man's methods generally, in common, I imagine, with his character, are less direct than Jonson's; and his subtler, more metaphysical mind is, perhaps, more adept at borrowing the thought or image, rather than the actual words in which these may be expressed, and at cunningly transfusing ideas and expressions

¹ *T.N.* was probably first produced as a court masque favouring the Alençon marriage. See ante pp. 23, 24.

borrowed simultaneously from two different Shakespearean plays, and also, at intervals, weaving with them imitations, or translations, from Homer, Virgil, Seneca, or some other classical writer perhaps in the hope and expectation, not wholly unfounded, of thus blinding all his more academic critics to the real source of his principal borrowings. To this crafty custom, which he shared with Jonson, more than to any other of his literary tricks, I attribute his success in concealing, hitherto, facts which these pages will, I hope, for the first time, bring to light.

That performances of the play had produced charges of imitation, and of emulation also, seems to be implied in these lines, from the prologue to the printed edition :—

We offer it, gracious and noble friends,
To your review ; we, far from emulation
(And charitably judge from imitation),
With this work entertain you—

since no Elizabethan dramatist, I imagine, would deliberately, in advance, draw his readers' attention to the possible existence of one or of the other, had not rumours to the contrary been already abroad in the land.¹

With the eighth line of "Bussy" his borrowings may be said to commence, when his hero's words :

In forming a Colossus, if they make him
Straddle enough, strut, and look big, and gape,
Their work is goodly—

remind us of Cassius (*J.C.*, i. 2)

¹ Jonson makes similar disclaimers in his preliminaries to "The Silent Woman," which is taken largely from "Twelfth Night."

110 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus . . .

while this couplet—

Man is a torch borne in the wind ; a dream
But of a shadow, summ'd with all his substance.—

seems to echo at once Macbeth's "out, out brief candle," and also Puck's epilogue speech (*M.N.D.*, v. 2)

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear . . .

this last supposition being strengthened by the fact that, four lines lower down, occurs a verbatim quotation from "The Dream"—

To put a girdle round about the world—
Chapman's fancy, it would seem, seeking to warm the cold inspiration of his opening verse in the glow of Shakespeare's imagination, and, perhaps, of Fletcher's¹ too, if, as I suggest, the lines—

So when we wander furthest through the waves
Of glassy glory, and the gulfs of state—

derive from Wolsey's speech (*Henry VIII*, iii. 2)

Say—Wolsey—that once trod the ways of glory,
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,
Found thee a way out of his wrack to rise in—

and the couplet—

We must to Virtue for her guide resort,
Or we shall shipwrack in our safest port—

¹ I suppose Fletcher to be substantially the author of *Henry VIII*. Possibly Fletcher is here imitating Chapman.

besides repeating the "wrack" motive quoted above—is close also, in meaning, if not in words, to

Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Monsieur's second speech, after his entry, is, in Dr. Parrott's words, "a mere mosaic of ideas, examples, figures even, taken directly from one of Chapman's favourite authors, Plutarch (*De Latenter Vivendo*),"¹ and the learned editor goes on to express his belief, that Chapman had his Latin, or Greek, original open before him, while writing these paraphrases. I venture to concur, with this addition, that precisely what he did here with the classics, he was doing also, simultaneously, with Shakespeare.

Passing on to Bussy's second long speech—

But believe backwards, make your period
And creed's last article, 'I believe, in God.'
And (hearing villainies preach'd) t'unfold their art,
Learn to commit them; 'tis a great man's part—

the lines, I suspect, echo, while they definitely, though vaguely, challenge, the ethics of the well-known passage, from *Macbeth* i. 5—

Thou would'st be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it: what thou would'st
highly,
That would'st thou holily—

besides reminding one again of Wolsey's, "Fling away ambition," in the same speech from which we have just quoted.

¹ Chapman's Tragedies. Notes p. 548.

112 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

What has happened, I am convinced, is that, immediately upon the already quoted last line of Biron's first speech—

Or we shall shipwrack in our safest port—

upon the entry of Monsieur, with two pages—Monsieur himself being the Duke of Alençon, otherwise, as we have seen, Duke Orsino in "Twelfth Night," upon a prolonged imitation of which comedy Chapman is about to enter—the playwright's dialogue begins, at once, to follow "Macbeth," a play of which he is to make more systematic use later on. Monsieur's opening lines—

There is no second place in numerous State
That holds more than a cipher ; in a king
All places are contain'd. His word and looks
Are like the flashes and the bolts of Jove ;
His deeds inimitable, like the sea
That shuts still as it opes, and leaves no tracts
Nor prints of precedent for poor men's facts :
There's but a thread betwixt me and a crown :
I would not wish it cut, unless by nature

are quite in the king-shaping atmosphere of "Macbeth," while Monsieur's last speech before his exit—

Thou shalt have gloss enough, and all things fit
T'enchase in all show thy long-smother'd spirit :
Be ruled by me then. The rude Scythians
Painted blind Fortune's powerful hands with wings
To show her gifts come swift and suddenly,
Which, if her favourite be not swift to take,
He loses them for ever. Then be wise :—

is, in my opinion, just Lady Macbeth (i. 5) pouring "my spirits in thine ear," and bidding

her husband "Leave all the rest to me"—an inference again corroborated by Bussy's lines, that follow immediately upon Monsieur's exit—

What will he send ? Some crowns ? it is to sow
them

Upon my spirit, and make them spring a crown
Worth millions of the seed-crowns he will send—

which continue to follow Lady Macbeth's words, in the same speech,

And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impede thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Other lines, from the same soliloquy by Bussy, continue, in precisely the Macbeth vein of thought, e.g.,

I am for honest actions, not for great ;
and

Man's first hour's rise is first step to his fall ;
though a couplet inserted between—

There is a deep nick in time's restless wheel
For each man's good, when which nick comes, it
strikes,—

is very near in thought—though far away in its clumsy harshness of expression—to Brutus' famous speech (*Julius Caesar*, iv. 3)

There is a tide in the affairs of men.

Most of my readers, by this time, will, I expect have grasped the inwardness of the matter, which is that throughout this scene, from the first entry

of Monsieur (i. i. 34)¹ Chapman's mind has been turned, almost continuously, upon Macbeth, sometimes merely paraphrasing Shakespeare, at others criticizing him, by implication, as when he makes Bussy reply to Monsieur (Lady Macbeth) with the already quoted line—

I am for honest actions, not for great—

which I take to be, in some sort, a challenge to the philosophy of his rival's play. That method, with Shakespeare, Chapman will pursue, almost throughout "*Bussy D'Ambois*" and its sequel, "*The Revenge of Bussy*," which contain a series of running commentaries, sometimes eulogistic but more often satirical, upon "*Twelfth Night*," "*Macbeth*," "*Hamlet*," with "*Twelfth Night*" predominating throughout the first three acts.

That Chapman should have emulated "*Twelfth Night*" will surprise no one who is familiar with my earlier book, or who may have followed this one thus far. The historic background of that play, which I have traced in my second chapter, linking the fantasy, as it does, with events and personalities of vital interest to an Elizabethan audience; its compelling blend of exquisite poetry, and of robust humour—a combination upon which the austere and censorious Chapman will have stern comments to make: its whimsical conceits, and dainty wistfulness, made "*Twelfth Night*," from the start, what it still is—Shakespeare's most enchanting comedy. Jonson enviously realized that fact, when, in 1599, he travestied it, in "*Every Man Out of His Humour*," and Chapman, when writing "*Bussy*"

¹ The edition of Chapman referred to throughout is by Dr. T. M. Parrott.

—possibly at about the same time—was patently, and despite disclaimers, bent upon the same feat. But to my proofs, of which the following passage provided me with an early, and important, beginning.

I may deserve more than my outside shows ;
I am a scholar, as I am a soldier,
And I can poetise ; and (being well encouraged)
May sing his fame for giving ; yours for delivering
(Like a most faithful steward) what he gives.

A reading of those lines, with their obvious suggestions of Viola, Olivia, Orsino, and Malvolio, in the opening scenes of "*Twelfth Night*," followed, almost immediately by

I sing the praise
Of fair great noses, and to you of long ones.
What qualities have you, Sir, beside your chain
And velvet jacket ?¹

with its further reminders of the fame of Alençon's nose, and of the symbols of office of Olivia's steward, revealed unmistakably the presence here, behind the play, of Orsino, and the charming people of the two courts ; whereupon, thus provided with a clue, I went back to the entry of Maffé, and saw, at once, that the whole scene was an adaptation of various passages in "*Twelfth Night*," principally the duologue between Viola and the Clown, in iii. 1, and that between Orsino and the Clown in v. 1 ; though the most obvious of the early borrowings is from neither of these scenes, but from "*Twelfth Night*," ii. 5, where Malvolio's "She uses me with more exalted respect," re-appears, as Maffé's ; "You

¹ Symbols of a Steward's Office.

116 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

might use me with more respect" ; and this passage—

BUSS. What might I call your name ?

MAFF. Monsieur Maffé.

BUSS. Monsieur Maffé ? then, good Monsieur Maffé,

Pray let me know you better—

echoes Bottom's talk with the fairies, in " Midsummer Night's Dream," iii. 1.

I shall desire of you more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed—

and in the same play, iv. 1, wherein he addresses all the fairies as " Monsieur." Chapman's lines also recall the well-known scene in " Twelfth Night," i. 3—

SIR AND. Good mistress Accost, I desire better acquaintance.

MARIA My name is Mary, Sir.

Maffé's next speech, however—

Pray do so,

That you may use me better ; for yourself,
By your no better outside, I would judge you
To be some poet ; have you given my lord
Some pamphlet ?—

is probably from " Twelfth Night," v. 1, where, in the duologue between Orsino and the Clown, Chapman's play upon the word " better " is foreshadowed by

CLOWN. Truly, sir, the better for my foes and the worse for my friends.

DUKE. Just the contrary ; the better for thy friends—

while,

Have you given my lord some pamphlet ?
seems to come from Feste's request, in the same scene ; " Let me see his letter." Further, Bussy's line :—

That is to pass your charge to my poor use—
is, in my judgment, an ingenious compound of Fabian's " That is to give a dog " (*T.N.*, v. 1) and Viola's, " Nay, an thou pass upon me," from the corresponding kind of duologue in " Twelfth Night," iii. 1. The next twenty lines or so still paraphrase, more or less directly, the battle of wits between the Duke and Feste ; and the play rattles on, in the same manner, until we reach Bussy's speech, already quoted—

" I may deserve more than my outside shows," etc.
which seems to be a somewhat quaint jumble of Viola and Malvolio—" I can poetise " aiming at one, and " Your chain and velvet jacket," from Bussy's next speech, at the other. Maffé's lines, that follow—

A merry fellow, 'faith ; it seems my lord
Will have him for his jester ; and by 'r lady,
Such men are now no fools ; 'tis a knight's place ;
If I (to save my lord some crowns) should urge him
To abate his bounty, I should not be heard ;
I would to heaven I were an errant ass,
For then I should be sure to have the ears
Of these great men, where now their jesters have
them.

'Tis good to please him, yet I'll take no notice
Of his preferment, but in policy
Will still be grave and serious, lest he think
I fear his wooden dagger. Here, Sir Ambo !—

118 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

are packed with borrowings of phrase and idea, as witness :—

A Merry fellow, 'faith	VIOL. I warrant thou art a merry fellow (<i>T.N.</i> , iii. 4)
Such men are now no fools.	VIOL. This fellow is wise enough to play the fool. (<i>T.N.</i> , iii. 1)
Urge him t'abate his bounty.	FESTE. Let your bounty take a nap, I will awake it anon (<i>T.N.</i> , v. 1)
I fear his wooden dagger.	FESTE. With his dagger of lath. (<i>T.N.</i> , v. 1)
I would to heaven I were an errant ass, for then I should be sure to have the ears of these great men, where now their jesters have them. ¹	MALVO. I protest, I take these wise men, that crow so at these set kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies.
In policy will still be grave and serious.	cf. reference to Malvolio.

Chapman continues the same device with—

MAFF. If you be thrifty, and play the good husband, you may make
This a good standing living—

words that are, it seems, ingeniously paraphrased from—

FESTE. Would not a pair of these have bred, Sir?
VIOLA. Yes, being kept together and put to use—

while Bussy's last speech, before the entry of Henry, Guise, and the rest—

But since I know he would as much abhor
His hind should argue what he gives his friend,
Take that, sir, for your aptness to dispute—

I take to be Chapman's version of Antonio's disgust at the refusal of Viola—whom he mistakes

¹ This passage is, I suspect, also a hit at the errant Viola's ease of access to the ear and confidence of Orsino. The two allusions are cleverly, and characteristically, mingled into a semblance of originality.

for Sebastian—to hand back the seaman's purse ; with addition of Sir Andrew's cuff administered to Sebastian, whom he mistakes for Viola—"There's for you ! " Thus it comes about that these "crowns are sown in blood," not for the first time, when we remember Andrew's broken pate, and Toby's "bloody coxcomb."

Henry's first speech, upon his entry with Guise, Montsurry, Tamyra, and followers, at once raises questions, all very interesting, and similar to many others with which we shall be faced, when examining later plays of Chapman. In the "Tragedy of the Duke of Biron," for example, interpolated between obvious borrowings from Richard II, we shall come upon pointed references to the Earl of Essex, and, in the sequel to the play we are now considering—"The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois"—we shall find a eulogy of the Earl of Oxford interpolated between equally apparent borrowings from "Hamlet"—these two remarkable facts both pointing, in my judgment, to the same conclusion—that Chapman knew, and meant his audiences to know, that these two nobles were the actual historic prototypes of Richard II¹ and Hamlet, the central figures of the plays which Chapman is respectively imitating.² Here, in this first Bussy play, Chapman, I think, does precisely the same thing ; when, in successive speeches by Henry IV and Guise, reference is

¹ This identification gives point to the fact that "Richard II"—with Essex standing for the King—was the play given at the Globe—to the great wrath of Elizabeth—on the eve of the Essex conspiracy. The deposition scene was not printed in quarto of Richard II until 1608—five years after the Queen's death.

² For identification of Oxford as Hamlet, see pp. 240-7.

made to that "English virgin,"¹ in her English court, and to a "court form"—

In all observance, making demigods
Of their great nobles ; and of their old queen,
An ever-young and most immortal goddess—

and eulogizing Elizabeth, as "the rarest queen in Europe." Directly I had read this passage, I found myself at once associating Queen Elizabeth, in Chapman's mind, definitely with the characters of "Twelfth Night," and the court of Illyria with the court of London ; and thence was led on to investigations and conclusions, which have been already fully set forth in the second chapter of this book.² Meanwhile, I would ask the reader to bear in mind this fact—the comprehension and acceptance of which are, in my opinion, essential to a complete understanding of Elizabethan drama—that many Shakespearean plays—and especially, for our immediate purpose, "Twelfth Night" and "Hamlet"—are, in a very real sense, topical works, set in, and about, Elizabeth's court, and peopled by its frequenters ; and, further, that, correspondingly, both the "Bussy" plays, imitated, as they largely are, from "Twelfth Night," "Hamlet," and "Macbeth," though ostensibly in a French setting, are, at bottom, by their very origin, permeated with English thought and character.

Here, then, I return to the text of Bussy, with the next speech by Henry, reflecting, in tone and idea, rather than in actual phrase, Viola's speech

¹ Dr. Boas holds that this lady is Annable, the Duchess of Guise's Lady-in-Waiting.

² See Chapter II for identification of the characters of "Twelfth Night."

in "Twelfth Night," i. 2, wherein she expresses her desire to serve Olivia.

Continuing, the line—

Which they would soon see, would they change
their form—

expresses closely the plan, to change her form, germinating already in Viola's mind; and Montsurry's answer—

No question we shall see them imitate
(Though afar off) the fashions of our courts,
As they have ever aped us in attire—

together with,

Like apes disfigured with the attires of men,
followed by Monsieur's,

Sir, I have brought a gentleman to court,
and by Bussy's,

Though I be something altered in attire,
are not only deliberate satirical attacks by Chapman upon the comedy and characters of "Twelfth Night," but with other passages quoted afford also direct hints, given by the dramatist, to his audiences, to shew the identity of Olivia's court with that of Queen Elizabeth, and the personal identities of the "Twelfth Night" characters with famous contemporary historical names.

Right down to the entry of Barrisor, Chapman continues his imitations of Shakespeare's comedy, as no reader, I think, can fail to observe, who will read carefully the passage that follows (i. ii. 62-93).

122 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

HENRY. We like your alteration, and must tell you
We have expected th' offer^d of your
service ;

For we (in fear to make mild virtue
proud)

Use not to seek her out in any man.

BUSSY. Nor doth she use to seek out any man :
He that will win must woo her.

MONSI. I urged her modesty in him, my lord,
And gave her those rights that he says
she merits.

HENRY. If you have woo'd and won, then,
brother, wear him.

MONSI. Th' art mine, sweetheart. See, here's the
Guise's duchess,
The Countess of Montsurreau, Beaupres.
Come, I'll enseam thee ; ladies, y'are
too many

To be in council ; I have here a friend
That I would gladly enter in your graces.

BUSSY. Save you, ladies.

DUCH. If you enter him in our graces, my lord,
methinks by his blunt behaviour he
should come out of himself.

TAMYR. Has he never been courtier, my lord ?

MONSI. Never, my lady.

BEAUP. And why did the toy take him in the
head now ?

BUSS. 'Tis leap-year, lady, and therefore very
good to enter a courtier.

HENRY. Mark, Duchess of Guise, there is one i
not bashful.

DUCH. No, my lord, he is much guilty of the
bold extremity.

TAMYR. The man's a courtier at first sight.

BUSS. I can sing pricksong, lady, at first sight ;
and why not be a courtier as suddenly ?

BEAUP. Here's a courtier rotten before he be ripe.

BUSS. Think me not impudent, lady ; I am
yet no courtier ; I desire to be one, and
would gladly take entrance, madam,
under your princely colours.

All this, I submit, is unmistakable. The reference to Bussy's "blunt behaviour," comparable with Viola's "sauciness" ; his having "never been a courtier," and his references to leap-year—words that may have been inserted in the leap-years 1600 or 1604, or may be just a hit at Olivia's courtship of a seeming man ; the description of Bussy's "bold extremity," and lack of bashfulness, together with his ability to "sing pricksong, lady, at first sight,"¹ and to "be a courtier as suddenly," and his request "Think me not impudent," can have, in my judgment, but one meaning, which is supported by Guise's speech, after the entry of Barrisor

Soft, sir. You must rise by degrees, first being the servant of some common lady, or knight's wife, then a little higher to a lord's wife ; next a little higher to a countess ; yet a little higher to a duchess. . . .

all which is at once an enlargement of what Viola actually did, and, I think, an attack upon the want of probability, and of realistic truth, in the handling of scenes and characters, with which Chapman, and Jonson also, are constantly charging Shakespeare.

¹ cf. *T. N.*, i. 2. VIOLA : "I can sing
And speak to him in many kinds of music."

Bussy, meanwhile, continues to impersonate that maiden, by speaking lines which, so far as their substance, though not their form, is concerned, might have come straight from "Twelfth Night"—

Are you blind of that side, duke? I'll to her again
for that.

Forth, princely mistress, for the honour of court-
ship. Another riddle!—

through all which the reader will not fail to detect—what many members of Chapman's audiences must also have detected, and enjoyed—a keen satire on "Twelfth Night."

Continuing, Barrisor's

What new-come gallant have we here, that dares
mate the Guise thus?

is paralleled by Viola's brazen approach to Olivia, while,

The duke mistakes him, on my life, for some
knight of the new edition

is, to me, an interesting example of Elizabethan double meaning, having, almost certainly, a reference to Viola at Olivia's court, beneath the more obvious hit at the creation of new Knights, with the coming of James to the throne. From this point, however, Chapman, having run the Viola-Orsino source dry, turns, instead, to Malvolio, and continues to draw from the secondary plot of "Twelfth Night" until the end of the act, as witness the following excerpts: "Some strange distemper"—"Into the duchess's bed"—"What a metamorphosis a brave suit can work"—"Let the new suit work, we'll see the

issue"—"Leave your courting," and, particularly, this, after the exit of Guise and the king :—

BARR. . . . A fellow that has newly shaken off his shackles ; now does he crow for that victory.

L'AN. 'Tis one of the best jigs that ever was acted.

PYRR. Whom does the Guise suppose him to be, trow ?

L'AN. Out of doubt, some new denizen'd lord and thinks that suit newly drawn out a th' mercer's books.

BARR. I have heard of a fellow, that by a fixed imagination looking upon a bull-baiting, had a visible pair of horns grew out of his forehead ; and I believe this gallant, overjoyed with the conceit of Monsieur's cast suit, imagines himself to be the Monsieur.

L'AN. And why not ? as well as the ass, stalking in the lion's case, bear himself like a lion, braying all the huger beasts out of the forest—

all of which appears to be pure Malvolio, with a direct hit at Malvolio's ambition to put on "Monsieur's cast suit," otherwise to marry Olivia (Elizabeth) as Orsino (Alençon, Monsieur) would fain have done. The plot that follows, to toss their victim in the blanket, corresponds to the device of getting the steward shut up in the stable, as a madman. This passage—

L'AN. 'Sfoot, see how he stares on's.

BARR. Lord bless us, let's away.

matches Maria (*T.N.*, iii. 4)

La you, an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart ! Pray God, he be not bewitched !

and the remainder of the scene is packed with echoing phrases, many of them satirizing "Twelfth Night," such as "The subject of your ridiculous jollity" ; "Singular subject for laughter" ; "Imagined himself a lion" ; "Court your mistress" ; "We'll lead you a dance," and others, which the reader will find no difficulty in picking out for himself.

With the opening of the second act, Chapman, leaving "Twelfth Night," though not Shakespeare, for a while, turns to Hamlet, with the phrase :

D'Ambois' sudden bravery, and great spirit—
which I take to be a concealed mock at the Prince of Denmark's sudden putting on of resolute word and action, in the closet scene (*Ham.*, iii. 4). With Henry's first long speech, we are treated to a strange paraphrase, in sense, rather than in words, of passages from that scene, such as

Like a fly
That passes all the body's soundest parts,
And dwells upon the sores,

which seems to be based on

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there—

the word "blister" corresponding to "sore." Henry's phrase, "Calls valour giddiness," in the same speech, is, I suppose, more Chapmanese for, "Calls virtue hypocrite," after which, with the entry of Nuntius, and his speech—

What Atlas or Olympus lifts his head?—

we are passed on to Hamlet's lines that follow—
Nuntius' first words above quoted being based on,

the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command—
while his last two lines—

A tale so worthy, and so fraught with wonder
Sticks in my jaws, and labours with event—
echo

Ay me, what act
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ?
and take a part-motive, also, from Hamlet's
struggle in the grave, with Laertes (v. 1)

What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars and makes them
stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers ?

That many of these imitations are not easily discernible, I admit ; but of their authenticity I have no doubt whatever, especially in view of the fact that very many other borrowings from "Hamlet" will be pointed out, in the fourth and fifth acts of this play, and that Chapman's next drama, "The Revenge of Bussy," will be seen to be, from first to last, at once an imitation of, and commentary upon "Hamlet."

Then, with the last forty lines, or so, of the scene, before the entry of Monsieur and d'Ambois—on Guise's line, "Oh, piteous and horrid murder," and Beaupres, "an age of men"—we are, at once, reminded of "Julius Cæsar," and of the First Citizen's, "O piteous spectacle !" in the

Forum scene—Chapman having now begun to borrow again from Shakespeare's Roman play. Antony's, "Great Cæsar fell," becomes, in Nuntius' mouth, "So fell stout Barrisor,"¹ and the first four lines of his next speech—

Sorrow and fury, like two opposite fumes,
Met in the upper region of a cloud,
At the report made by this worthy's fall,
Brake from the earth, and with them rose Revenge

are concocted from the same scene, with its cries of, "Revenge!" "About!" etc., while the "angry unicorn," which, a few lines further down, "nails" the jeweller, "ere he could get shelter of a tree," seems to be an ingenious patchwork of "here wast thou bayed, brave heart," and

Unicorns may be betrayed with trees,

from "Julius Cæsar," ii. 1.

After Monsieur's entry, the scene continues to derive from the same sources, Monsieur's first speech echoing Antony's eulogy of Cæsar, while all the passage quoted below, so far as I understand it, seems to be a debate concerning the ethics of killing respectively in murder, and by duel, based, I think, in part—as Jonson's "Sejanus" also was—upon the theme of Shakespeare's doubtful morality, in making a hero of the murderer, Brutus. This is the passage, in which I have italicized the most significant lines.

¹ Nuntius' eight lines immediately preceding are drawn from a well-known passage in *Æneid*, ii. 626-63. See Parrott p. 551-52, where the Editor describes Chapman as here "writing under the imagination of a reminiscence."

MONS. . . . for your brother's love
(which is a special species of true virtue)
Do *that you could not do, not being a king.*

HEN. Brother, I know your suit ; these *wilful murders*

Are ever past our pardon.

MON. Manly slaughter
Should never bear th' account of *wilful murder ;*

*It being a spice of justice,*¹ where with life
Offending past law, equal life is laid
In equal balance, to scourge that offence
By law of reputation, which to men
*Exceeds all positive law,*² and what that
leaves

To true men's valours (not prefixing
rights

Of satisfaction, suited to their wrongs)
A free man's eminence may supply and
take.

HEN. *This would make every man that thinks
him wrong'd*

Or is offended, or in wrong or right,
Lay on this violence, and all *vaunt*
themselves

Law-menders and suppliers, though mere
*butchers ;*³

Should this fact (*though of justice*)⁴ be
forgiven ?

¹ cf. J. C., iv. 3. BRUTUS : What villain that did stab, and not
for justice ?

² cf. J. C., i. 2. BRUTUS : For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honour more than I
fear death.

³ cf. J.C., ii. 1. BRUTUS : Let us be sacrificers but not
butchers, Caius.

⁴ cf. above J.C., iv. 3, " What villain," etc.

130 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

MON. Oh, no, my lord ; it would make cowards
fear

To touch the reputations of true men
When only they are left to imp the law.

*Justice will soon distinguish murderous
minds*

From just revengers : had my friend
been slain,

(*His enemy surviving*) he should die,
Since he had added to a murder'd fame
(Which was in his intent) a murder'd man ;
And this had worthily been wilful murder ;
But my friend only saved his friend's dear
life,

Which is above life, taking th' under value,
Which in the wrong it did, was forfeit to
him ;

And in this fact only preserves a man
In his uprightness ; worthy to survive
Millions of such as murder men alive.¹

Henry's next speech, rather strangely, falls away
from "Julius Cæsar," and seems to be harking
back towards the ghost's plaint, in "Hamlet," i. 5—

Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away—

which Chapman translates into—

HEN. Let your life
(Refined by passing through this merited
death)
Be purged from more such foul pollution.

Bussy's last speech, before Henry's exit with
Nuntius, contains lines—

¹ "Chapman is never weary of repeating that a virtuous
man is above the law."—Parrott, p. 552.

And do a justice that exceeds the law;
 If my wrong pass the power of single valour
 To right and expiate; then be you my king,
 And do a right exceeding law and nature—

all which, while aiming, to some extent, at
 “Julius Cæsar,” seems to echo, textually, Bas-
 sanio, in “The Merchant of Venice,” iv. 1—

To do a great right do a little wrong.

Then, from Monsieur, comes this naïve line—

Now vanish horrors into Court attractions—
 as a signal to us, who are in the secret, that
 Chapman’s errant muse is returning from “Julius
 Cæsar” to “Twelfth Night,” and is about to
 provide us with an extremely interesting example
 of deliberate, though concealed, imitative censure
 of Shakespeare, in this passage following imme-
 diately upon the entry of Montsurry, Talmyra,
 and the rest, at the opening of ii. 2.

MONT. He will have pardon, sure.

TAMYR. ’Twere pity, else.

For though his great spirit something
 overflow,

All faults are still borne, that from
 greatness grow;

But such a sudden courtier saw I never.

BEAU. He was too sudden, which indeed was
 rudeness.

TAMYR. True, for it argued his no due conceit

Both of the place and greatness of the
 persons,

Nor of our sex: all which (we all being
 strangers to his encounter) should have
 made more manners

Deserve more welcome.

132 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

MONT. All this fault is found
Because he loved the duchess and left you.

TAMYR. Alas, love give her joy. I am so far
From envy of her honour, that I swear,
Had he encounter'd me with such proud
slight,
I would have put that project face of his
To a more test than did her duchesship.

BEAU. Why, (by your leave, my lord,) I'll speak
it here,
Although she be my aunt, she scarce was
modest,
When she perceived the duke her husband
take
Those late exceptions to her servant's
courtship,
To entertain him.

TAMYR. Ay, and stand him still,
Letting her husband give her servant
place ;
Though he did manly, she should be a
woman.

Few of my readers, who have followed me thus far, will, I imagine, be disposed to deny that beneath the disguise of an attack upon Bussy's boldness at court, and his refusal to be awed by the great personages about him, we have here Chapman's censure of Viola's too saucy first appearance before Olivia, and of Olivia's reception of the young nuncio, which "scarce was modest." The parallels of situation and circumstance, rather than of actual language, are very close, right up to the last quoted line—

Though he did manly, she should be a woman—

which, in fact, Viola was ; and bearing in mind the historic identity of the "Twelfth Night" characters, as set forth in Chapter II, I incline to the opinion that Chapman, besides attacking Shakespeare, who seems to have been in favour of the Anjou match, may also be attacking here the behaviour of Alençon's envoy, La Môle, the young French nuncio, from whom Viola was drawn, and Elizabeth's too gracious reception of him.¹ I do not wish, however, to press that suggestion, the passage being already an intensely interesting one, merely in its relation to the face value of Shakespeare's play. Immediately upon reading the line, by Beaupres—

Although she be my aunt, she scarce was modest—
followed by the words—

Those late exceptions to her servant's courtship—
I connected them with Sir Toby's relationship to his niece, Olivia, and with Maria's warning to Sir Toby (*T.N.*, iii. 1)—

My lady takes great exceptions to your ill hours ;
and I felt confident that, with Chapman's mind running, obviously, upon the earlier scenes of "Twelfth Night," more such comments were at hand. They did, in fact, follow close upon ; for, upon the entry of Guise, like an outraged Malvolio, with the speech—

D'Ambois is pardon'd ; where's a king ? where
law ?

See how it runs, much like a turbulent sea ;
Here high, and glorious as it did contend

¹ See ante pp. 24-30.

134 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

To wash the heavens and make the stars more pure ;
And here so low, it leaves the mud of hell
To every common view—

I, at once, read the passage as a critical commentary upon the early scenes of "Twelfth Night," appraised somewhat in this way by Chapman.

"You, Shakespeare, are unpardonable. You call yourself, or are called by your admirers, the king of poets¹ ; but, if you are a king, and, therefore, potentially a law-giver, by what law, or canon, of unified art, I ask you, does your play run as boisterously as any turbulent sea, so high and glorious, in those sweetly lyrical passages—

Build me a willow cabin at your gate,
And call upon the soul within the house—

as though the music of your verse would

Wash the heavens and make the stars more pure ;
and then, while this magical ecstasy is still upon us, descending, headlong, down to the crudities of that kitchen scene, in which drunken wit is bandied about, and all is grossly conceived,

So low it leaves the mud of hell
To every common view.

Such I take to be Chapman's vigorously expressed, though darkly concealed, opinion, of Shakespeare's success, as a lyrical poet, and of his failure as an artist,² in mingling the lyric rhapsodies of Orsino, Viola, and Olivia, with the

¹ cf. Jonson : " Poor poet-ape, that would be thought our chief."

² cf. Jonson in the conversations with Drummond : " Shakespeare wanted art."

buffooneries of Toby and his boon companions. Mr. Arthur Acheson, in his "Shakespeare and the Rival Poet" (i.e. Chapman), tells us that, so far as he knows, Chapman's only admission of merit in Shakespeare is to be found in the lines :

And though to rhyme and give a verse smooth feet,
Uttering to vulgar palates passion sweet,

and so forth, which are from "Achilles, Shield," a poem of 1598, appended to a translation of the 18th book of the Iliad, and containing many attacks upon his rival. Those verses from Bussy however, quoted above, though voicing, no doubt, the commonly held university opinion concerning Shakespeare—that he "wanted art"—unquestionably sound, behind the æsthetic censure, a deep, if possibly grudging, note of admiration for the lyrical genius that could so gloriously offend. Many other such eulogies, implicit, if not expressed, are to be found in the laborious Shakespeare imitations with which Chapman's text abounds.

Tamyras's long speech that follows containing such phrases as

I cannot cloak it . . .
The more it is compressed the more it rageth

.

So, of a sudden, my licentious fancy
Riots within me. . . .

. . . and that holy man

That, from my cradle, counsell'd for my soul,
I now must make an agent for my blood—

seems to be a long paraphrase of Olivia's lines
(*T.N.*, iii. 1)

I love thee so that, maugre all thy pride,
Nor wit nor reason can my passion hide—

save that the idea of the holy priest as the instrument for satisfying, by the rite of marriage, an unholy passion, may have been furnished by the marriage of Olivia to Sebastian (*T.N.*, iv. 3).

Now go with me, and with this holy man,
Into the chantry by.

Thus the play rambles on, the phrase by Monsieur—

archers ever

Have two strings to a bow—

being, quite possibly, a dig at Olivia's relations with Viola and Sebastian, or at the Duke's with Olivia and Viola, or even, still further beneath the surface, at Queen Elizabeth herself. This passage—

MONS. Dames maritorious ne'er were meritorious;
Speak plain and say ' I do not like you,
sir,
Y'are an ill-favour'd fellow in my eye ' ;
And I am answer'd.

TAMYR. Then, I pray, be answer'd ;
For in good faith, my lord, I do not like
you
In that sort you like.

MONS. Then have at you, here :
Take (with a politic hand) this rope of
pearl,
And though you be not amorous, yet be
wise :
Take me for wisdom ; he that you can
love
Is ne'er the further from you—

is still in the "Twelfth Night" vein (iii. 1), the more patently borrowed lines being

CLOWN. I do not care for you.

VIOL. Hold, there's expenses for thee
and

VIOL. This fellow is wise enough to play the
fool—

while Monsieur's "Y'are an ill-favour'd fellow," and Tamyra's line, a little further down, "Y'are a vile fellow," are, I suppose, from Viola, in the same scene, "Thou art a merry fellow"; nor should I be surprised to know that all this scene, in ii. 2, was aimed, not only at Shakespeare, but also at some actual, though now forgotten, incident, connected with the Alençon courtship.

Readers, who are sufficiently interested, will find no difficulty in picking out, hereabouts, many other such parallels, both of thought and expression, such as "thy more comfortable beauties," matching Olivia's "a comfortable doctrine" (*T.N.*, i. 5); but I must quote in full this passage, which is an interesting example of Chapman's method, when he is admiringly, and perhaps, a little enviously paraphrasing, rather than satirizing, Shakespeare's poetry, and vainly striving to reproduce the orchestral music, and the haunting melody of his verse.

TAMYR. Farewell, my light and life; but not in
him,

In mine own dark love and light bent to
another.

Alas that in the wave of our affections
We should supply it with a full dissem-
bling,

138 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

In which each youngest maid is grown a
 mother ;
 Frailty is fruitful, one sin gets another :
 Our loves like sparkles are that brightest
 shine
 When they go out. . . .

Those lines, in common with so many of Chapman's, are turgidly obscure in thought, and involved in expression ; but a careful reading of them will, I think, shew that they are subtly rewoven from Viola's monologue at the close of T.N., ii. 2—

Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,
 Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
 How easy is it for the proper false
 In women's waxen hearts to set their forms !
 Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we !
 For such as we are made of, such we be—

and also from the well-known duologue, between Orsino and Viola, in the fourth scene of the same act. Chapman has here so cunningly manipulated themes and phrases, that the plagiarisms are not very easy to follow ; but the following parallels will, I think, be comprehensible and convincing ; especially if a wary eye is kept upon the italicized words :—

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>TAMYR. My own dark <i>love</i> and
 light bent to another
 . . . in <i>the wave</i> of our
 <i>affections</i>.</p> | <p>cf. Olivia's relations with
 Viola's and Viola's with
 Orsino, etc.</p> |
| <p>TAMYR. We should supply it
 a full <i>dissembling</i>.</p> | <p>DUKE. Mine (<i>love</i>) is all as
 hungry as <i>the sea</i>.
 DUKE. Or thy <i>affection</i> cannot
 hold the best.
 VIOL. <i>Disguise</i>, I see thou art
 a <i>wickedness</i>.
 VIOL. She never told her
 love, but let <i>conceal-</i>
 <i>ment</i>.</p> |

- TAMYR. *Frailty* is fruitful, one *sin* gets another.
- VIOL. Alas, our *frailty* is the cause, not we.
- DUKE (to Viola). Let thy love be younger than thyself. For women are as roses whose fair flower Being once display'd doth fall that very hour.
- TAMYR. Each youngest maid is grown a mother . . . our loves like sparkles are that *brightest shine when they go out.*
- VIOL. And so they are, alas, that they are so ; To *die, even when they to perfection grow.*

The reader will not fail to compare Chapman's analogy, concerning young maidens' love that shines brightest at the moment of extinction, with Shakespeare's metaphor of roses that fall dispetalled on their first display. Tamyra's beautiful speech, with its haunting, cosmic quality, that follows, offers another extremely interesting example of Chapman's deeply obscure, and involved yet, in this instance, not wholly unsuccessful method of interweaving ideas and phrases from a number of popular Shakespearean speeches, and the fashioning from then fresh poetry of his own.¹ These are the lines—

Now all ye peaceful regents of the night,
Silently gliding exhalations,
Languishing winds, and murmuring falls of waters,
Sadness of heart and ominous secureness,
Enchantments, dead sleeps, all the friends of rest
That ever wrought upon the life of man,
Extend your utmost strengths ; and this charm'd
hour
Fix like the Centre ; make the violent wheels
Of Time and Fortune stand ; and great Existence
(The Maker's Treasury) now not seem to be,

¹ Just as Falstaff was a "cause of wit in other men," so was Shakespeare himself of poetry.

To all but my approaching friends and me.
 They come, alas ! they come ; fear, fear and hope
 Of one thing, at one instant fight in me ;
 I love what most I loathe, and cannot live
 Unless I compass that which holds my death.

Now when first I read this passage, with considerable admiration, and some bewilderment, my impression was that Chapman had borrowed its almost cosmic theme wholly from Claudio's well-known arraignment of death in Act iii, Scene I of "*Measure for Measure*"¹ ; but a further investigation soon satisfied me that—probably with a view to concealing more completely his tracks—he had also incorporated into that passage a number of words, and ideas, from Macbeth's closing speech (iii. 2), beginning

"There's comfort yet ; they are assailable."

which he will use again towards the end of his third act. The borrowings, like those we have just been examining from "*Twelfth Night*," are interwoven with extreme ingenuity ; yet what follows will, I think, make Chapman's method clear :—

TAMYR. Ye peaceful regents of the night, Silently gliding exhalations	MACBETH. Night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
---	---

Here Chapman, while cunningly transmuting "agents" into "regents," has retained exactly the darkling atmosphere of Shakespeare's superb lines, and the reader will not fail to note that Macbeth's mental picture, of the beasts of darkness stealthily tracking their prey, is imitated by

¹ He uses it again in "*The Revenge of Bussy*," and a third time in the first Biron play. See pp. 255-6 and 264-67.

Chapman in the "silently gliding exhalations."
The fourth line of the speech—

Sadness of heart and ominous secureness—

with its sense of wistful, yet serene, evening quietude, contrasted with the awful events, that are being plotted, is, of course, pure Macbeth ; and "enchantments, dead sleeps," echo the scenes with the witches, and recall

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.

From that point onward, however, the speech begins to turn more definitely from "Macbeth" to "Measure for Measure"; such phrases as "the friends of rest," and "the violent wheels," sounding, as I think, an echo of Claudio's words "blown with restless violence"; this wind-motive being again visible, in both plays, in Claudio's "the viewless winds," and Chapman's "Languishing winds." Further, the expression,

great Existence

(The Maker's Treasury) now not seems to be—
paraphrases—

This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod.

As for,

They come, alas ! they come ; fear, fear and hope
of one thing, at one instant fight in me—

it is, quite certainly, I think, drawn from "Macbeth," v. 5—

The cry is still "They come" . . .
I have almost forgot the taste of fears—

142 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

while the last couplet of Tamyra's speech, before the opening of the vault—

I fly my sex, my virtue, my renown,
To run so madly on a man unknown—

seems a reversion to Olivia's infatuation for Viola ; an opinion borne out by the further couplet, four lines lower down,

How shall I look on him ? how shall I live,
And not consume in blushes ?

and also by these words in the next speech, from the " ascended " Friar to d'Ambois—

You know besides, that our affections' storm,
Raised in our blood, no reason can reform—

which is palpably a recast of the Duke (*T.N.*, ii. 4),

Or thy affection cannot hold the bent—

blended with Olivia's

Nor wit¹ nor reason can my passion hide ;

both of which lines we have seen Chapman using before, in an earlier scene of the same act.

The Friar's next speech (ii. 2) harks equally upon Viola's mission, and her secret love, as witness—

your courtship

Of the great Guise's Duchess in the presence,
Was by you made to his elected mistress,

together with,

For the direct is crooked ; love comes flying ;
The height of love is still won with denying—

this last paradoxical couplet being unusually interesting, because it shows not only Chapman's

¹ cf. from the same speech of the Friar : " your wit and spirit."

deep appreciation of the famous passage, "she never told her love," but reveals him also as what, at heart, he was, far more than dramatist—namely a metaphysician and philosopher, able, at times, to plunge deeper into abstract thought than could the master-poet, whom he was imitating; for who will deny the truth of Chapman's comment, that we never feel more poignantly the pathetic beauty of Viola's love, than at the moment when she is concealing it from its object. Both these speeches by the Friar, standing, in some sort, for Chapman himself, must, it seems, be read as a continuous commentary upon "Twelfth Night"; for no reader, I imagine after what has gone before—can read this passage

She must never know
That you know anything of any love
Sustain'd on her part; For learn this of me;
In anything a woman does alone,
If she dissemble, she thinks 'tis not done;
If not dissemble, nor a little chide,
Give her her wish, she is not satisfied;
To have a man think that she never seeks,
Does her more good than to have all she likes:
This frailty sticks in them beyond their sex,
Which to reform, reason is too perplex:
Urge reason to them, it will do no good;
Humour (that is the chariot of our food
In everybody) must in them be fed,
To carry their affections by it bred—

without realizing its application to Viola's love-affair in particular, and thence to woman in general, as being all Violas, in their several degrees. Woman's "humour," argues Jonson's friend, altogether in the Jonsonian vein, demands

opportunity to dissemble, even in love, and is never wholly satisfied, until she gets it. The scenes, and lines, from "Twelfth Night," of which Chapman is making use, are, of course, those we have already quoted from ii. 3 and 4—

Disguise (dissembling) I see, thou art a wickedness.

Alas our frailty is the cause, not we !—

Nor wit nor reason can my passion hide—

Or thy affection cannot hold the bent—

and so forth.

The remainder of the act continues to ring the changes upon the same theme, as every reader, now forewarned, will be able to see for himself ; though I must not neglect to point out one very curious, and characteristic, illustration of Chapman's ethically austere, and somewhat mystical, frame of mind, when—still with "Twelfth Night," and particularly the kitchen-scene—which already, by implication, he has denounced, in his thoughts—he thus, while transmuting it, recalls the interruption of the revellers by Malvolio.

TAMYR. Oh, father ! but at this suspicious hour
You know how apt best men are to
suspect us,

In any cause, that makes suspicion's
shadow

No greater than the shadow of a hair.

And y' are to blame. . . .

Though all the doors are sure, and all our
servants

As sure bound with their sleeps ; yet
there is One

That wakes above, whose eye no sleep
can bind ;
He sees through doors, and darkness, and
our thoughts ;
And therefore as we should avoid with
fear,
To think amiss ourselves before his
search ;
So should we be as curious to shun
All cause that other think not ill of us.

Chapman, as I think, is here deliberately reminding admirers of Shakespeare's play, that, whether servants sleep o' nights, as they should, or revel, as they should not, while their mistresses sleep, there dwells somewhere, nevertheless, beyond our visible ken, a greater than Malvolio, "whose eye no sleep can bind." Not every mind, I am aware, will here give to Chapman its sympathy, without reserve ; but—believer or sceptic—none can deny, to the author of the above quoted lines, either an august reverence for the spiritual possibilities of mankind, or a deeply religious outlook upon the problems and the spectacle of the mysterious universe that we inhabit.

The opening lines of the third act, spoken by Bussy, again it seems, with application to Malvolio—

Sweet mistress, cease, your conscience is too nice
And bites too hotly of the Puritan spice—

are disheartening in their suggestion of further concealed disquisitions upon "Twelfth Night," from which the writer—and, I suspect, some readers too—would welcome a respite. Happily,

146 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

we are to have one ; not only because Chapman, for the moment, has run that vein nearly dry, but also because, as the play begins to draw towards a tragic close, its author naturally seeks more serious inspiration, and, in fact—drawn thereto, no doubt, by its lofty metaphysical qualities—turns to “Macbeth,” which, with “Hamlet,” as an alternative, is, henceforth, the principal quarrying ground for “Bussy.” This passage, from Tamyra’s first speech—

Before I was secure 'gainst death and hell ;
But now am subject to the heartless fear
Of every shadow, and of every breath,
And would change firmness with an aspen leaf ;
So confident a spotless conscience is,
So weak a guilty—

is still Macbeth ; and the lines—

Mix'd with a gushing storm, that suffers nothing
To stir abroad on earth but their own rages,
Is sin, when it hath gather'd head above us
No roof, no shelter can secure us so—

are probably suggested by Macbeth (iv. 1)

Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches ; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up ;
Though bladed corn be lodged, and trees, blown
down ;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads.

Bussy’s first long speech in the act, beginning, “Sin is a coward, madam,” is likewise full of the Macbeth theme, and of Macbeth echoes, as these comparisons shew

... the sly charms
Of the witch policy makes him
like a monster
Kept only to show men for
servile money :
That false hag often paints
him in her cloth
Ten times more monstrous
than he is.
In three of us, the secret of our
meeting is only guarded

MACDUFF. And live to be the
show and gaze o' the time
We'll have thee, as our rarer
monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and
underwrit
" Here you may see the
tyrant ! "

Macbeth v. 8.

FIRST WITCH. When shall we
three meet again ?

Macbeth i. 1.

though Chapman has interpolated another idea, from " Twelfth Night," iv. 2, which, because it is metaphysical, is relevant, namely

And so our ignorance tames us, that we let
His shadows fright us—

which I take to be a reminiscence of Malvolio, among the shadows of his prison house, hearing, from without, the malicious wisdom of the clown ; " There is no darkness but ignorance," and another from Hamlet, his cloud that was " almost in shape of a camel " becoming " empty clouds in the form of dragons, lions, elephants."

The magnificent, though obscure, couplet concerning " your fame in me "—i.e., Tamyra's in Bussy—closing the speech—

But make it fly out of the mouths of kings
In golden vapours and with awful wings*

is, in my judgment, a great effort, upon Chapman's part, to wing here an equal flight with Shakespeare, the former's meaning—taking the passage as a whole—being, I suppose, that—if it is to be royally fruitful, and efficacious—valour—unlike Macbeth's unphilosophical courage—must be ever at the service of virtue,

* This couplet I take to be, at the same time, a eulogy and a descriptive imitation of the majesty of Macbeth's speeches.

The scene continues, patently to imitate "Macbeth," some of the parallels being as follows (*Bussy*, iii. 1).

TAMYR. Our bodies are but
thick clouds to our souls,
through which they cannot
shine when they desire.

MACBETH. Your spirits shine
through you (*Macbeth*, iii. i).

TAMYR. When all the stars, and
even the sun himself must
stay the vapour's fumes.

LADY M. Memory the warder
of the brain shall be a fume.
(*Macbeth*, i. 17).

Oh, how can we, that are but
motes to him, Wandering at
random in his ordered rays,
Disperse our passion's fumes,
with our weak labours, That
are more thick and black
than all earth's vapours?

MACBETH. Stars, hide your
fires, Let not light see my
black and deep desires.
(*Macbeth*, i. 4).

MONT. Then will I never more
sleep night from thee.

MACBETH. Methought I heard
a voice cry, "Sleep no
more." (*Macbeth*, ii. 2).

Upon Tamyra's word, "fantasy," in her next speech—and there may be more than mere coincidence in the transition—Chapman's fancy leaves "Macbeth," to busy itself awhile again with "Twelfth Night"; this passage—

MONT. shall we now to bed ?

TAMYR. Oh, no, my lord ; your holy friar says
All couplings in the day that touch the bed
Adulterous are, even in the married—

being, probably, derived from Malvolio's " day-bed where I have left Olivia sleeping " ; while Montsurrý's lines—

great D'Ambois

(Fortune's proud mushroom shot up in a night)—

and,

Each natural agent works but to this end ;
and again,

D'Ambois

Cannot to his ambitious end effect—

with their echo of "fortune, all is Fortune," suggest a characteristically chaotic jumble of Malvolio's supposed sudden elevation, and of his unbridled ambition, with that of Macbeth ; while the second line, "natural agent" of the three above quoted, read together with the night-motive from the first, derive, I suspect, from Macbeth's

Night's black agents to their prey do rouse.

Bussy's first speech, on his entry with Henry, Monsieur, Guise, and the Duchess (iii. 2), runs on the Malvolio and conspirators theme,¹ the line—

Who use truth like the devil, his true foe—
reminding us of Toby's,

Defy the devil. Consider he's an enemy to
mankind—

as well as of the Witches' trick, of "paltering" with Macbeth, and with veracity, "in a double sense." Other turns of speech, hereabouts, such as "bound in chains" ; "'tis a subtle knave" ; "rageth in his entrails" ; "I cast thee off" ; "I'll make you sport enough" ; and "royalty rising from a clap-dish," are all in the vein of *T.N.*, iii. 4, the last quotation emphasizing, once more, the fact that, as I believe, Olivia's historic

¹ The lines "Flatterers are kites that check at sparrows," from Henry's speech that opens the scene, recall Viola (*T.N.*, iii. 1) "And like the haggard, check at every feather."

150 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

original was no Countess, but an English queen. Other similar echoes (iii. 2.) follow, as swiftly as one can pick them up—"Protean law" recalling Feste's change of costume, from clown to clergyman, and leading up to this couplet—

Show me a clergyman, that is in voice

A lark of heaven, in heart a mole of earth—

which I take to be, at once, Chapman's eulogy of Feste's lyrical and vocal power, and a denunciation of his unfortunate application thereof. "Your pheasants and your partridges" emanated, I suppose, from "fear to kill a woodcock"; and, "You then may hang him," thrice repeated, we have heard before, in Malvolio's "Go, hang yourselves all" (*T.N.*, iii. 4).

After the entry of Montsurry and Tamyra, Chapman continues to harp upon Malvolio in the stable, as in the line by Guise—

Y' are a glorious (boastful) ruffian, and run proud
Of the king's headlong graces—

other parallels following, such as

Bussy. Proves he th' opinion CLOWN. What is the opinion
that men's souls are without of Pythagoras concerning
them? wildfowl?

MALV. That the soul of our
grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

while all this passage, spoken by Henry—

Cousin Guise, I wonder
Your honour'd disposition brooks so ill
A man so good, that only would uphold
Man in his native noblesse, from whose fall
All our dimensions rise; that in himself
(Without the outward patches of our frailty,

Riches and honour) knows he comprehends
 Worth with the greatest ; kings had never borne
 Such boundless empire over other men,
 Had all maintain'd the spirit and state of D'Ambois
 when carefully examined, becomes visibly, I
 think, a cunning paraphrase of, and commentary
 upon, the treatment of Malvolio in the prison.
 The lines—

A man so good, that only would uphold
 Man in his native noblesse—

were, in my judgment, written in imitation and strong approval of Malvolio's character—"I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion"—and in protest against his treatment in "*Twelfth Night*"; the whole passage, in common with many others in this fascinating play, concealing, beneath the surface story of D'Ambois, a eulogy of Shakespeare's potential loftiness, and recognition of the nobility of human nature, coupled with an honest regret, on Chapman's part, that, while "comprehending worth with the greatest," the author of "*Twelfth Night*" should thus derogate from his own dignity, and belittle that of mankind in general, by thus mingling, in this Feste-Malvolio scene, the sublime with the ridiculous¹—and all for no better purpose than to please idle courtiers at Whitehall, or noisy groundlings at the Globe. That, from Chapman's austere view-point, his arguments are not altogether without validity, many may be prepared to admit ; for, boundless though our admiration be for Shakespeare's

¹ cf. ante pp. 133-5, the corresponding protest by Chapman against the violation of art by the contiguity of the lyrical and the revel scenes.

universality of conception, what thoughtful reader or spectator of "Twelfth Night," has not marvelled, before now, at the daring which put the words, "I think nobly of the soul," into the mouth of an alleged madman, imprisoned in a dark stable, and "There is no darkness but ignorance" upon the lips of a professional fool, avenging himself upon his victim's misery.

After Henry's exit with d'Ambois, Chapman—though still shaping his thought upon scenes from "Twelfth Night"—permits a little of the Macbeth motive, and dialogue, to creep in; Monsieur's line,

What had my bounty drunk when it raised him?
echoing Lady Macbeth (i. 7)—

Was the hope drunk

Wherein you dress'd yourself?

while Guise's,

Upstarts should never perch too near a crown,
seems to be Malvolio-cum-Macbeth, as is also this passage—

Let us cast

Where we may set snares for his ranging greatness:
I think it best, amongst our greatest women:
For there is no such trap to catch an upstart
As a loose downfall; for you know their falls
Are th' ends of all men's rising: if great men
And wise make scapes to please advantage
'Tis with a woman: women that worst may
Still hold men's candles¹; they direct and know
All things amiss in all men; and their women
All things amiss in them—

¹ cf. *Macbeth*, v. 5: "Out, out, brief candle!"

wherein Orsino's talk concerning women, and Lady Macbeth's evil influences upon her husband, are both "remembered," confirmation of the borrowing following, at once, in the immediate reference to "the most royal beast of chase, the hart," with its echo of Curio's "the hart," in "Twelfth Night" i. 1.¹

Monsieur's next speech :—

I have broken
The ice to it already with the woman
Of our chaste lady

foretells Chapman's return to Maria, and her fellow conspirators ; and Montsurry's, "What, skittish servant?" and Guise's, "As far as an uncle may," seem to echo Olivia's serving-woman and Sir Toby, while Monsieur's "spirit of courtship of all hands," I take to be a quiet thrust at Shakespeare's trick of coupling off his characters at the close, whether in the primary or secondary plot. Pero's "strange discovery"—I saw d'Ambois and herself reading a letter"—commented on by Monsieur, as "the happiest shot that ever flew"—runs all upon the same theme : and the words that follow—

The infinite regions betwixt a woman's tongue
and her heart ! is this our goddess of chastity ?—

while also aimed, perhaps, at Olivia, may, possibly, have been intended also, and have been understood by individuals among Chapman's audiences, as a satirical comment upon, the mendacities and duplicities of Olivia's prototype, Queen Elizabeth, in her relations with the Duke of

¹ CURIO. Will you go hunt, my lord ?

DUKE. What, Curio ?

CURIO. The hart.

Alençon who is, almost certainly, the original of Orsino.†

The same speaker's, "I plotted this with her woman," and "Dear Pero, I will advance thee for ever," is more "Twelfth Night"; and so also, of course, is Charlotte's, "All that I can conjecture touching my lady your niece, is a strong affection she bears to the English Mylor." Monsieur's "dry palm" Chapman probably owed to Sir Andrew's, "I can keep my hand dry"; and the passage that follows—

GUISE. Here's one, I think, has swallowed a porcupine, she casts pricks from her tongues so.

MONT. And here's a peacock seems to have devoured one of the Alps, she has so swelling a spirit, and is so cold of her kindness—

patently attacks Olivia, and, perhaps, Maria as well.

The "riddle" episode, that follows, though its phraseology also echoes "Twelfth Night," is too coarse to be conveniently commented on; but this passage—

MONT. . . . 'Tis miraculous to think with what monsters¹ women's imaginations engross them when they are once enamoured, and what wonders they will work for their satisfaction. They will make a sheep valiant, a lion fearful.

† It should be borne in mind that Chapman wrote mainly for the private theatres, and therefore for audiences of higher culture, and subtler appreciation than was to be found generally in the public theatre.

¹ cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 1. HAMLET to OPHELIA: "Wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them."

MONS. And an ass confident. Well, my lord,
more will come forth shortly; get you
to the banquet.

GUISE. Come, my lord; I have the blind side of
one of them.

(Exit Guise cum Montsurry)

MONS. Oh, the unsounded sea of women's bloods,
That when 'tis calmest, is most dangerous;
Not any wrinkle creaming in their faces
When in their hearts are Scylla and
Charybdis,
Which still are hid in dark and standing
fogs,
Where never day shines, nothing never
grows,
But weeds and poisons, that no statesman
knows,
Nor Cerberus ever saw the damned nooks
Hid with the veils of women's virtuous
looks—

affords interesting proof that Chapman, like his friend, Jonson—and, one supposes, with equal reason—deeply mistrusted women. That many of them, from their queens downwards, were crafty, treacherous, and immoral, no one who has studied that age, and the characters, for example, of Elizabeth, and of Mary, Queen of Scots, can, for an instant, doubt; but Shakespeare—who, also, could be bitter enough towards women, as Hamlet's duologue with Ophelia shows—was the only dramatist of the three with universality enough in him to rise above the limitations of his day, and to reveal, to the subsequent delight of millions, the potential beauty of a woman's mind.

156 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Returning to our text, such a line as,

Where never day shines, nothing never grows,
But weeds and poisons—

conjures up again the sinister figure of Lady Macbeth, and recreates the atmosphere of that tragedy, with which, in "Bussy," and, in lesser degree with "Hamlet," Chapman, as we have seen, rings the changes upon "Twelfth Night"; but, before closing the third act, with a plunge deep into the "Macbeth" manner, Maffé and Monsieur, between them—following Maffé and d'Ambois in the first scene of the play—indulge in talk strongly reminiscent of Feste, with occasional echoes of Andrew Aguecheek audibly sounding through it, as witness these parallels :—

- | | |
|--|--|
| MONS. While he stands on
protection of his folly.
(<i>Bussy</i> , iii. 2) | FESTE. Give me leave to prove
you a fool.
(<i>T.N.</i> , i. 5) |
| MAFF. I had my head broke
in his faithful service.
(<i>Bussy</i> , iii. 2) | SIR A. He has broke my head
across.
(<i>T.N.</i> , v. 1) |
| MONS. The devil and d'Ambois !
How am I tortured with this
trusty fool. (<i>Bussy</i> , iii. 2) | SIR A. He's the devil incar-
dinate.
MALV. I marvel your ladyship
takes a delight in
such a barren rascal.
(<i>T.N.</i> , i. 5). |

But, after the last quoted line, Chapman, as we shall see, characteristically, lifts the comic catastrophe, of the cowardly duellists in "Twelfth Night," to its tragic equivalent in "Macbeth," with,

I fear him strongly, his advanced valour
Is like a spirit raised without a circle—

whereupon, with Maffé's entry, Feste-Aguecheek swells into "Macbeth" (i. 7)—

I dare do all that may become a man ;
Who dares do more is none—

being rendered, by Chapman

I cannot help it : what should I do more ?
while Macbeth's " secret'st man of blood "
(iii. 4) develops into

MAFF. The man of blood¹ is enter'd.

MONS. Rage of death ! If I had told the secret.

All this, in my judgment, is borrowed directly
from the banquet-scene ; and so is the passage
that follows (*Bussy*, iii. 2).

BUSSY. O royal object !

MONS. Thou dream'st, awake ; object in th'
empty air ?

BUSSY. Worthy the brows of Titan, worth his
chair.

MONS. Pray thee, what mean'st thou ?

BUSSY. See you not a crown
Impale the forehead of the great King
Monsieur ?

MONS. Oh, fie upon thee !

BUSSY. Sir, that is the subject
Of all these your retired and sole dis-
courses—

these last being from Macbeth's monologues,
during the banquet scene, in one of which occurs
the phrase, just quoted—" The secret'st man of
blood." The scene continues, in the same vein,
though this passage—

¹ Dr. T. M. Parrott notes (p. 555) " As this line does not occur in the first edition of *Bussy*, the phrase may have been suggested to Chapman by his reading of Grimestone (i.e., Grimestone's *General Inventory*, 1611) for the Biron plays." It seems clear, however, that it comes from *Macbeth*."

158 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

BUSSY. Ay, anything but killing of the king.

MONS. Still in that discord, an ill-taken note ?
How most unreasonably thou play'st the
cuckoo,
In this thy fall of friendship !

BUSSY. Then do not doubt,
That there is any act within my nerves
But killing of the king. . . .

with its suggestion of the cuckold motive, in Gertrude's "o'er hasty" marriage to Claudius—

As kill a king and marry with his brother—

shews that here, for the moment, we have, probably, Hamlet-cum-Macbeth.

With Monsieur's request to Bussy, that follows, for a full unfolding of Bussy's views, upon the delicate subject of his (Monsieur's) personal character—

I charge thee utter . . .

The full and plain state of me in thy thoughts—
and Bussy's reply—

Why, this swims quite against the stream of greatness ;

Great men would rather hear their flatteries—

we have, almost certainly, an echo of, and, probably, a veiled satire upon, the witches ; but much more interesting than this is Monsieur's last long speech, before the end of the act—in which he tells Bussy exactly what he thinks of him—and Bussy's equally frank reply. Both speeches, for full comprehension, must be read I think, with some regard to the complex circumstances of the case—that Monsieur, in history, is

Francis, Duke of Alençon, suitor to Queen Elizabeth, a weakling of despicable character ; that in "Twelfth Night"—always, for that reason, present at the back of Chapman's mind—Alençon is probably Orsino ; and that here he is, in part at least, both Orsino and Macbeth, of which last play—beneath and within the surface drama of "Bussy"—this duologue may be regarded as an imitation and a satire. That the scene presents, at the same time, a bitterly ironical attack upon the character of Bussy as Hamlet, is a conclusion that seems to follow, confirming my opinion that the play may have been written, originally, as a counterblast to Shakespeare's comedy, denouncing the Alençon marriage, which "Twelfth Night," in its first form, may have advocated, as also did the Earl of Oxford, the historic original of "Hamlet."¹

For convenience of reference, I reprint here the bulk of the passage and below it the more obvious parallels in "Hamlet" and "Macbeth." The two men, it will be remembered, have engaged themselves, each to state openly what he thinks of the other :—

BUSSY. What else, sir ? Come, pay me home ;
I'll bide it bravely.

MONS. I will swear : I think thee then a man
That dares as much as a wild horse or tiger ;
As headstrong and as bloody ; and to feed
The ravenous wolf of thy most cannibal
valour,

(Rather than not employ it) thou would'st
turn

Hackster to any whore . . .

And run as mad as Ajax ; serve a butcher,

¹ See ante pp. 23, 4.

Do anything but killing of the King :
That in thy valour th' art like other
naturals

That have strange gifts in nature, but
no soul

Diffused quite through, to make them of
a piece,

But stop at humours that are more absurd

And in those humours wouldst envy,
betray,

Slander, blaspheme, change each hour
a religion ;

Do anything but killing of the King :

That in thy valour . . .

Thou art more ridiculous and vain-
glorious

Than any mountebank ; and impudent

Than any painted bawd ; which, not to
soothe

And glorify thee like a Jupiter Hammon,

Thou eat'st thy heart in vinegar ; and
thy gall

Turns all thy blood to poison . . . makes
thee . . .

To study calumnies and treacheries ;

To thy friends' slaughters like a screech-
owl sing,

And do all mischiefs but to kill the King.

BUSSY. So, have you said ?

MONS. How think'st thou ? Do I flatter ?

Speak I not like a trusty friend to thee ?

BUSSY. That ever any man was blest withal ;

So here's for me. I think you are (at
worst)

No devil, since y' are like to be no king ;

Of which, with any friend of yours, I'll lay
This poor stillado here, 'gainst all the stars,
Ay, and 'gainst all your treacheries, which
are more ;

That you did never good, but to do ill ;
But ill of all sorts, free and for itself.

That (like a murdering piece, making
lances in armies,

The first man of a rank, the whole rank
falling)

If you have wrong'd one man, you are so
far

From making him amends, that all his
race,

Friends, and associates fall into your chase:

That y' are for perjuries the very prince

Of all intelligencers, and your voice

Is like an eastern wind, that where it flies

Knits nets of catterpillars, with which
you catch

The prime of all the fruits the kingdom
yields.

That your political head is the cursed fount

Of all the violence, rapine, cruelty,

Tyranny, and atheism flowing through
the realm.

That y' ave a tongue so scandalous, 'twill
cut

A perfect crystal ; and a breath that will

Kill to that wall a spider ; you will jest

With God, and your soul to the devil
tender

For lust . . .

That you are utterly without a soul ;

And, for your life, the thread of that was
spun

When Clotho slept, and let her breathing
rock

Fall in the dirt ; and Lachesis still draws
it,

Dipping her twisting fingers in a bowl
Defiled, and crown'd with virtue's forced
soul.

And lastly (which I must for gratitude
Ever remember) that of all my height
And dearest life, you are the only spring,
Only in royal hope to kill the King.

MONS. Why, now I see thou lovest me ; come
to the banquet.

[*Exeunt*]

Now these two long speeches seem to me to be nothing else than a curiously involved jumble of lines from "Hamlet" and "Macbeth," two plays of which the two principal characters in part resemble one another very closely. The first parallel is obviously with Macbeth

MONS. . . . A man
That dares as much as a
wild horse or tiger.

MACBETH. What man dare,
I dare . . . Approach thou
like . . . the Hyrcan tiger.
(*Macbeth*, iii. 4).

but the line, "Thou would'st . . . run as mad as Ajax," seems to be rather in the Hamlet vein, as also are the repeated phrases,

Do anything but killing of the King—

while the charge against Bussy, that he would "change each hour a religion," though applicable also to the mental vacillations of Macbeth, is explicable also as a reference to "Hamlet," which play, in its opening scenes, with the ghost's

reference to the Romish doctrine of Purgatory, and later (iii. 2) with Hamlet's oath—

'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on
than a pipe?—

shews distinctly Roman Catholic tendency, although "the rest is silence" seems, at the close, to deny orthodox belief. Again, the charge against Bussy, of being, in his valour, "more vain-glorious and ridiculous than any mountebank" may well be aimed at the rhetorical challenge hurled at Laertes in Ophelia's grave—"Wil't eat a crocodile?"—while the phrase—

more . . . impudent.

Than any painted bawd; which, not to soothe
And glorify thee like a Jupiter Hammon¹—

could refer to the closet-scene, in which Hamlet alternately upbraids and "soothes" that "painted bawd" (the Queen) and "glorifies" his late father with "the front of Jove himself" (*Ham.*, iii. 4). Lastly, the closing lines—

To study calumnies and treacheries;
To thy friends' slaughters like a screech-owl sing,
And do all mischiefs but to kill the King—

may be possibly intended to satirize the putting away, by craft, of Hamlet's friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, "the song," in that case, being Hamlet's outburst, "Come let the stricken deer go weep," at the close of the play-scene—a surmise rather borne out by the fact that the words "gall" and "poison," both of which are

¹Dr. Boas, in his "Belles Lettres Series" edition, suggests that this is "an allusion to the adoration of Alexander the Great, as the son of Jupiter Hammon."

here used by Chapman, appear also in the corresponding passage of Shakespeare's play ; " He poisons him i' the garden " ; and " the hart ungalled play."

Throughout this speech, however, Monsieur, probably with a view to deceiving his trackers, has so fashioned his lines that they may be also paralleled from " Macbeth." The " Hyrcan tiger " borrowing I have already pointed out ; and the " absurd humours " charge, together with those of " changing religion," and " vainglorious valour," are equally applicable to Macbeth. Quite possibly it would have puzzled Chapman himself to determine which of the two Shakespearean characters Monsieur had most definitely in mind when shewing up Bussy, though probably Macbeth was uppermost. Here are other parallel passages, in this speech, between Chapman and " Macbeth."

MONS. Do anything but killing
of the King.

(*Bussy*, iii. 2)

Naturals that have strange
gifts in nature, but no soul
Diffused quite through

Humours that are more ab-
surd . . .

LADY M. Infirm of purpose,
etc.

(*Macbeth*, ii. 2)

BANQUO. The earth hath bub-
bles, as the water hath, and
these are of them.

(*Macbeth*, i. 3).

cf. the grotesque antics and
words of the witches.

These last two references, by Monsieur, to the " Naturals," or witches of " Macbeth," and their " absurd humours," are most interesting, in the light they throw upon Chapman's own conception of these creatures, which, I suppose, concurs very nearly with Shakespeare's. What, precisely, the weird sisters may be, Chapman has doubts, though his description of them—written by a believer in witchcraft—as gifted simpletons seems to shew that he does not regard them,

any more than Shakespeare did, either as mere figments of imagination, nor yet as spirits, possessing a "soul diffused quite through"; but shared Banquo's belief, that they were "bubbles," or emanations of nature, physical or metaphysical, and gifted with the strange and occult powers of some borderland between two worlds. The passage we are discussing, indeed, provides a further interesting comparison, with Chapman's lines from "A Coronet for His Mistress Philosophy," almost certainly aimed at Shakespeare—

Courtship of antic gestures, brainless jests,
Blood without soul, of false nobility,
Nor any folly which the world infests—

and reiterating, as the reader will have observed, this same idea of creations that are more "blood without soul."¹ Meanwhile the borrowings from Macbeth continue

Thy gall	LADY M. Make thick my
Turns all thy blood to poison.	blood . . . and take my
	milk for gall.
	(<i>Macbeth</i> , i. 6)
To thy friends' slaughters	It was the owl that shriek'd . . .
like a screech owl sing	I heard the owl scream.
	(<i>Macbeth</i> , ii. 2)

The next long speech, in which Bussy gets his own back upon Monsieur, by an equally candid, and no less savage, recitation of his friend's moral deficiencies, is more "Macbeth," with scraps from "Hamlet" in addition; as when Bussy borrows the phrase, "like a murdering piece" from the king's "Like to a murdering piece" in "Hamlet" iv. 5—Bussy's—

¹ Since these lines were written, a further examination of this passage has convinced me that three of its stanzas, including the quoted words, are aimed at Oxford, as well as at Shakespeare.

166 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

If you have wronged one man, you are so far
 From making him amends, that all his race,
 Friends and associates fall into your chase,
 being, undoubtedly, as I think, Chapman's
 protest against the indiscriminate extension of
 Macbeth's murders to Fleance (by intention), Lady
 Macduff, and the rest, while the lines

Your voice
 Is like an eastern wind, that where it flies
 Knits nets of caterpillars

seems to me with what follows, to be a cunning
 adaptation of the well-known passage (*Macbeth*,
 iii. 2) :—

Ere the bat hath flown
 His cloister'd flight ; ere to black Hecate's summons
 The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
 Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
 A deed of dreadful note—

wherefrom the flight-motive has been borrowed,
 "Black Hecate's summons" becoming "your
 voice," and the bat and the beetle being trans-
 formed into caterpillars ! The last fifteen lines
 of Bussy's speech, already quoted, seem to me to
 be drawn from, and to denounce, what Chapman
 held to be the blasphemies of the witches scenes
 in "*Macbeth*"—compare, for example, the phrases,
 "You will jest with God," and "Liver of blas-
 pheming Jew"—the, to him, absurdly incon-
 gruous mentalities of the weird sisters, and the
 comically appalling ingredients of the cauldron,
 which, though not specifically mentioned by
 Chapman, in this typically mystical and confused
 passage, are hinted at in the line—

Dipping her twisting fingers in a bowl—

i.e., the bowl that already held another "finger," cut from the hand of a "birth-strangled babe." The closing line of the act—

Why, now I see thou lovest me; come to the banquet—

while foreshadowing borrowings from Macbeth's banquet-scene, in the opening of the next act, is, on the face of it, Monsieur's ironical retort to Bussy, and may also, perhaps, be interpreted as a parting gibe, by Chapman, at the weaker points of his rival's tragedy.

CHAPTER VI

“BUSSY D’AMBOIS” (ACTS 4 AND 5), “MACBETH” AND “HAMLET.”

Shows that, as the tragic motive of his drama develops, Chapman turns from “Twelfth Night,” and bases his fourth act, mainly, upon “Macbeth,” which, while secretly imitating, he alternately lauds and attacks. His fifth act is imitated, almost exclusively, from “Hamlet,” the characters of which play, including that of the Prince of Denmark, are commented upon, and criticized, in a most interesting way.

THE close of the third act having invited us to “come to the banquet,” which, in more explicit terms, is Chapman’s version of the banquet-scene, in “Macbeth,” iii. 4, we find that the commencement of his fourth act is based thereon, its opening lines, by Henry—

Ladies, ye have not done our banquet right,
Nor look’d upon it with those cheerful rays—

being drawn from Lady Macbeth’s,

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good
meeting

With most admired disorder ;

while Bussy’s speech, that follows—

’Tis not like, my lord,

That men in women rule, but contrary—

with its application of the moon-metaphor to women’s variableness, seems to be, in part, an echo of Hamlet motives, such as “the glimpses of

the moon," and in part a reference to Ophelia's inconstancy—the unreliability of women being a subject that hovers as persistently in the background of Chapman's mind, as it did in that of Jonson. Alternatively, the theme may have been suggested by the witches' line, "slivered in the moon's eclipse," from "Macbeth," iv. 1, which scenes also we have seen Chapman lately "remembering"; or again, mindful of Monsieur's relation—who also takes part in the scene—to Orsino, in "Twelfth Night," we may have here another reminiscence of the Duke's comments upon women, and of Viola's lines (*T.N.*, ii. 2)—

How easy is it for the proper false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms.
Alas! our frailty is the cause, not we—

a passage which seems to suggest Monsieur's :—

Either men rule in them, or some power
Beyond their voluntary faculty

and at once leads up again to the "Macbeth" motive, which, with "Hamlet," will hold, henceforth, to the end of this strange play. Bussy's second speech, indeed,

A man say to a dead man, "Be revived!"
As well as to one sorrowful, "Be not grieved."
And therefore, princely mistress, in all wars
Against these base foes that insult on weakness,
And still fight housed behind the shield of Nature,
Of privilege, law, treachery, or beastly need,
Your servant cannot help; authority here
Goes with corruption: something like some States,
That back worst men: valour to them must creep
That, to themselves left, would fear him asleep—

170 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

though as involved and turgid in expression as are fifty other orations that precede or follow it—is, I think, by intention, a running commentary upon the witches, and their relations with Macbeth ; a distinct clue being given by the phrase, “ behind the shield of Nature,” which recalls the similar expression—

They (i.e. the witches) have strange gifts in Nature,
but no soul—

from “ Bussy,” iii. 2, which we considered in the preceding chapter.¹ Monsieur’s

Hark, sweetheart, here’s a bar set to your valour :
It cannot enter here—

is also another echo of the banquet-scene ; while this passage—

MONS. If you knew all.

TAMYR. Knew all, my lord ? What mean you ?

MONS. All that I know, madam.

TAMYR. That you know ? speak it.

MONS. No, ’tis enough. I feel it²—

though probably containing a hint of the doctor, in “ Macbeth,” v. 1 — “ You have known what you should not ” — is palpably drawn also from the scene (*Macbeth*, iv. 3) between Macduff, Malcolm, and Ross, after the former has been told of the murder of his wife and children :—

MALC. Dispute it like a man.

MACD. I shall do so ;

But I must also feel it as a man.

¹ See ante pp. 164, 5.

² Dr. T. H. Parrott has an ingenious note (p. 556) concerning the “ by-play ” in this passage ; but he has not observed that it is taken from *Macbeth*.

But methinks
Her courtship is more pure than heretofore ;
True courtiers should be modest, but not nice,
Bold, but not impudent ; pleasure love, not vice,

MACD.

Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny ; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy
 throne,
And fall of many kings : But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours : you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty
And yet seem cold. . . .

MONS. Who dares do that? the brother of his king?

which seems to aim at Claudius and Gertrude, though the latter half of Bussy's speech, with Monsieur's answer—

like death
Mounted on earthquakes, I would trot
through all

Honours and horrors, through foul and
fair

And from your whole strength toss you
into the air.

MONS. Go, th' art a devil ; such another spirit
Could not be 'still'd from all th' Armenian
dragons—

is an astonishing mixture of lines, and motives,
from several scenes in *Macbeth*, as the following
comparisons shew.

Like death
Mounted on earthquakes
(*Bussy*, iv. 1)

Trot through all honours and
horrors

Through foul and fair . . .
Toss you into the air.

MONS. Go, th' art a devil ; such
another spirit etc. . . .

MACBETH. Heaven's cherubim
horsed upon the sightless
couriers of the air.

(*Macbeth*, i. 7).

cf. Malcolm's confessions of
vice, linked with the idea of
kingship. (*Macbeth*, iv. 3)

Fair is foul and foul is fair :
Hover through the fog and
filthy air (*Macbeth*, i. 1)

MACD. Not in the legions of
horrid hell can come a devil
more dam'd in evils to top
Macbeth. (*Macbeth*, iv. 3)

Continuing, Monsieur's

She hath breathed a mind
Into thy entrails, of desert to swell
Into another great Augustus Cæsar

seems to be just a paraphrase of "Bring forth
men children only," and Henry's contribution to
the trilogy—

Here's nought but whispering with us ; like a calm
Before a tempest

is, I suppose, the hush before the murder, while
the lines

I see almighty Aether in the smoke
Of all his clouds descending ; and the sky
Hid in the dim ostents of tragedy¹

though apparently based, as regards the first two of them, upon Virgil's *Georgics*, ii. 325-26,² continue Chapman's desperate effort to match the grandeur of one of Shakespeare's loftiest speeches (*Macbeth*, i. 7), from which, a few lines above, as we have seen, the author of "Bussy" has borrowed the "heaven's cherubim" metaphor, and all of which, quite evidently, he intensely admired. The first of the three lines last above quoted—"I see almighty Aether," etc.—are almost certainly suggested by,

Pity like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast—

while the last—

the sky

Hid in the dim ostents of tragedy—

paraphrases, very cunningly,

Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.

Thus, in almost wearisome succession, the *Macbeth* parallels follow one another, at intervals of a few lines. This passage, in further example,

MONS. Nay, they are two, my lord.

MONT. How's that ?

MONS. No more.

¹ If the word "ostent" be taken as meaning "portent" or "prodigy," as in

"This dire ostent the fearful people view
from Dryden's version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," it becomes almost a synonym for "horrid deed," and makes the plagiarism much more apparent.

² Parrott, p. 556.

MONT. I must have more, my lord.

MONS. What, more than two?

MONT. How monstrous is this.

may refer to other murders following upon those of the two grooms, and of Duncan and Banquo ; the line, "I must have more" being possibly suggested by Macbeth's exclamation (iii. 4) "They say blood will have blood" ; but Chapman, by this time, has nearly exhausted the possibilities of "Macbeth" as a quarrying ground, and, excepting an episode or two, will borrow the remainder of his play mainly from "Hamlet," to which—after the exits of Guise and Monsieur, in this same scene (iv. 1) during the duologue between Montsurry and Tamyra—we are led up by "the plagues of Herod," recalling "It out-Herods Herod." Several lines, hereabouts, in fact, echo Gertrude or Ophelia ; this one

TAMYR. Will you wreak

Your anger's just cause given by him,
on me.

being based, probably, on the closet-scene, while these—

MONT. Your tongue will still admire,

Till my head be the miracle of the world—

derive, in my judgment, from Ophelia's eulogy of Hamlet, "O what a noble mind," etc., Tamyra's, "Woe is me" echoing Ophelia's couplet, that closes the same speech,

O, woe is me,

To see what I have seen, see what I see.

Pero's speech, that follows—

What does your lordship mean ?

Madam, be comforted ; my lord but tries you ;

Madam ! help, good my lord, are you not moved ?

Do your set looks print in your words your thoughts ?

Sweet lord, clear up those eyes, unbend that masking forehead ; whence is it

You rush upon her with these Irish wars,¹

More full of sound than hurt ? But it is enough,

You have shot home, your words are in her heart ;

is almost certainly an attack, and in part a satire, upon Hamlet's denunciation of his mother, "more full of sound than hurt," but, nevertheless, "home in her heart." As usual, however, Chapman tries to conceal his borrowings from one play, by cunningly blending them with others, lifted from a second, as here where, "more full of sound than hurt," followed by Montsurry's, "chased with my fury," derive, no doubt, from Macbeth's "full of sound and fury" ; just as Tamyra's, "I have too long lived," two lines lower down, are from "Macbeth" v. 3, "I have lived long enough." Montsurry's next speech, beginning,

'Twas from my troubled blood, and not from me

equally mingles two plays, a part of its quality being from Hamlet's closing speech (v. 2), as witness, "my whole heart is wounded," comparable with, "a wounded name . . . shall live behind me" ; while this couplet—

¹ The phrase "Irish wars" does not appear in the first edition. Dr. Parrott holds (notes p. 557) that the allusion must be to the conspiracy of Tyrone and Tyrconnel in 1607, and to the revolt of Sir Catier O'Doherty in 1608, both *more full of sound than hurt* : This helps us to date the revision of "Bussy" soon after these events.

176 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Your name and memory altogether crave
In just oblivion their eternal grave—
epitomizes Macbeth's oft-quoted lines—

It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

There follows a long speech from Tamyra, before the entry of D'Ambois and the Friar, based wholly upon the sleep-walking scene,—“ a poor woman to death given over ”—the closest parallels being

TAMYR. Make haste
To see the dangerous paper.
 (*Bussy*, iv. i).

GENTLEWOMAN: I have seen
her . . . unlock her
closet, take forth paper.
 (*Macbeth*, v. i)

Clear thy breast of me.

DOCTOR. The heart is sorely
charged.

but Pero's speech, that follows, takes up to the play-scene, in “Hamlet,” iii. 2, “What, frightened with false fire !” which, in Chapman, appears thus :—

What violence is this, to put true fire
To a false train ?

just as Hamlet's remark to Rosencrantz—

We shall obey were she ten times our mother—
made only a few moments later in that play,
reappears, in Chapman, as

TAMYR. I will defy him
 Were he ten times the brother of my king.

At this point, with the entrance of D'Ambois and the Friar—before the last named does a little in the spirit-raising line—we come upon two speeches, which, as the reader will now be able to detect,

at a glance, are an extraordinary jumble of lines and motives taken principally from the closet-scene, with others in which the ghost appears. In addition to obvious parallels of situation and motive, these are some of the direct verbal imitations :

Bussy. To scent the haunts of mischief. (<i>Bussy</i> , iv. 2)	GHOST. I scent the morning air. (<i>Ham.</i> , i. 5).
FRIAR. You have amazed me.	GHOST. Amazement on thy mother sits. (<i>Hamlet</i> , iii. 4)
FRIAR. If any spirit i' th' earth or air.	HAMLET. Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd. (<i>Hamlet</i> , i. 4).

after which, following upon the stage direction *Ascendit Bussy with Friar*, we are given a duologue, between Bussy and Tamyra, that seems to me to be pure closet-scene, as witness again the parallels :

Bussy. How is it with my honour'd mistress ? (<i>Bussy</i> , iv. 2)	HAMLET. How is it with you, Lady ? (<i>Hamlet</i> , iii. 4)
TAMYR. Save me from the gripes of shame and infamy.	HAMLET. O shame, where is thy blush ? (<i>Hamlet</i> , iii. 4)

Bussy. What cold dull northern brain
cf. Denmark and Norway.

while the following, which precedes the Friar's Latin incantation, for the raising of Behemoth—

FRIAR.	I will command Our resolution of a raised spirit.
TAMYR.	Good father, raise him in some beauteous form That with least terror I may brook his sight—

derives, probably, from Horatio's lines (i. 1)

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march !

178 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Behemoth's first line is borrowed, not—as those unversed in the tricks of Elizabethan plagiarism might suspect—from words spoken by the Ghost in "Hamlet," but, instead—as I think—from Hamlet's words to the Ghost, in the closet-scene—the line, "What would your gracious figure?" becoming "What would the holy Friar?" Another line of Behemoth's, in the spectre's second speech—

In these blue fires and out of whose dim fumes—
a typical example of Chapman's heavily constructed, yet mystically melodious verse—derives, almost certainly, from Hamlet's father (i. 5)—

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames :
these sudden jumps from scene to scene, as also the mingling of borrowed lines from different plays, being done, no doubt, with intention to conceal the plagiarism, if possible. The same desire, on Chapman's part, probably accounts for the fact that, some 20 lines lower down, in the following passage—

FRIAR. Show us all their persons
And represent the place, with all their
actions.

BEHE. The spirit will straight return ; and then
I'll show thee—

he reverts, for a moment, to "Macbeth," the borrowed lines being

FIRST WITCH. Show !

SEC. WITCH. Show !

THIRD WITCH. Show !

ALL. Show his eyes, and grieve his
heart ;

Come like shadows, so depart.

A show of eight kings . . . Banquo's Ghost following.

while the following couplet—

BUSSY. May we not hear them ?

FRIAR. No, be still and see—

appears to come from the same scene (iv. 1) of “Macbeth”—

MACB. Tell me, thou unknown power.

FIRST WITCH. He knows thy thought :

Hear his speech, but say thou
nought.

The theme now turns again to Hamlet, with an added touch of Queen and Ghost, in the closet-scene, cum Ophelia, cum Cassius, in “Julius Cæsar” ; the passage—

BEHEMOTH. Persuasion hath already entered
him

Beyond reflection ; peace till their
departure.

MONTSURRY. (*with a paper*)

There is a glass of ink where you
may see

How to make ready black-faced
tragedy

being concocted, I think, in part from Cassius (J.C., i. 2)—

So well as by reflection, I, your glass,

Will modestly discover to yourself—

and, in part from the ghost's, “Amazement on thy mother sits,” blended with Hamlet's

You go not till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you ;

while Montsurry's,

You now discern, I hope, through all her paintings,
Her gasping wrinkles

may be from Hamlet's words to Ophelia (iii. 1)

I have heard of your paintings too.

These words, from his next speech—

A worthy man should imitate the weather
That sings in tempests—

probably derive from Ophelia's snatches of song,
warbled in the midst of mental tempests, a
supposition borne out by the two speeches pre-
ceding the entry of Pero, with a letter—

GUISE. Go home, my lord, and force your wife to
write

Such loving lines to D'Ambois as she used
When she desired his presence.

MONS. Do, my lord,

And make her name her conceal'd
messenger,

That close and most inenarrable pander,
That passeth all our studies to exquire ;
By whom convey the letter to her love :
And so you shall be sure to have him
come

Within the thirsty reach of your revenge
Before which, lodge an ambush in her
chamber

Behind the arras, of your stoutest men
All close and soundly armed ; and let
them share

A spirit amongst them that would serve
a thousand—

which seem to be compounded from the listening plot, contrived by the King and Polonius, with Ophelia's connivance at the undoing of Hamlet. The next passage—

GUISE. Yet a little ; see, she sends for you.

MONS. Poor loving lady ; she'll make all good yet,

Think you not so, my lord ?

[*Exit Montsurry and stabs Pero.*]

GUISE. Alas, poor soul !

MONS. That was cruelly done, i' faith.

PERO. 'Twas nobly done.

And I forgive his lordship from my soul.

is again Gertrude-Ophelia-Hamlet, including the sending for her son by the Queen, the slaying of Polonius, and Hamlet's noble cruelty, first to Ophelia, and then to his mother ; the words "cruelly done," and "nobly done," revealing, I think, in a very significant way, Chapman's comprehension of the moral grandeur and lofty nobility of soul, behind the ferocious cruelty of the prince's verbal attacks upon two weak and defenceless women.

The remainder of the act follows the same general trend, the words—

Be sure to use the policy he advised—

referring either to Hamlet's advice to his mother, or to the Ghost's to Hamlet, in the closet-scene, or to both ; while Bussy's—

I'll soothe his plots ; and strow my hate with smiles—

has been heard before in "damned, smiling villain," a phrase at once suggesting that Chapman

182 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

here echoes also the Prince's soliloquy, behind his kneeling father—

That his soul may be as damn'd and black !

(*Ham.*, iii. 3)—

an inference supported by Bussy's fifth line, of the same speech—

To make the vein swell that his soul may gush—

in which the "vein-swelling" motive comes, probably, from Hamlet's phrase, "the heyday in the blood." The remainder of Bussy's speech, closing the act, is wholly in the "policy shall be flanked with policy" of the "Hamlet" play.

With the opening of the fifth act, Montsurry, "unbraced," comes on, dragging his wife, Tamyra, across the stage by her hair, an act of violence which, as might be expected, gives occasion for further borrowings from the closet-scene, as witness this, by the Friar—

Your wife's offences¹ serve not . . .

. . . to touch her with a bloody hand ;

Nor is it manly, much less husbandly,

To expiate any frailty in your wife

With churlish strokes or beastly odds of strength—

which again paraphrases, "Speak daggers to her, but use none" (*Ham.*, iii. 2), while the friar's further homily, upon the treatment of a wife—

Do not touch her then ;

Be not more rude than the wild seed of vapour,²

To her that is more gentle than that rude—

¹ cf. *King*. O my offence is rank. (*Hamlet*, iii. 3).

² i.e., the lightning. The Friar has just referred to "the stormy birth of clouds"—i.e., the thunderbolt—which "will touch no laurel ; nor any sleeper."

seems to be a blend of the ghost's gentle advice to Hamlet, concerning his mother—

O, step between her and her fighting soul.
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works—

with a remembrance of "Hamlet" i. 2, the Prince's

So loving to my mother,
That he might not betem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly ;

Chapman having transmuted Shakespeare's "winds of heaven" into "vapours," and concocted the expression "wild seed," for lightning, I suspect, from Hamlet's phrase, the "mildew'd ear blasting his wholesome brother," in the closet-scene—a typical example of Chapman's willingness to sacrifice simplicity and lucidity of phrase, provided that he can at once imitate, and conceal his imitations of, the rival poet from whom he is borrowing.

Further, Montsurry's reply to the Friar—

Rely on my love to her, which her fault
Cannot extinguish—

though expressed in prose, not poetry, is, in substance, just such an answer as Hamlet might truthfully have made to the ghost ; and the Friar's, "It is a damned work," may be again "Hamlet"—"It is a damned ghost that we have seen" (*Ham.*, iii. 2). Montsurry's question, following upon the Friar's exit—

Who shall remove the mountain from my breast ?
was probably suggested by,

Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed ;

and the lines by Montsurry (v. 1)

my hot woes
(Vented enough) I might convert to vapour¹
Ascending from my infamy unseen

paraphrase, once more,

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven !
that last word, be it noted, appearing in the phrase, "trump of heaven," which Chapman used three lines before ; just as, similarly, Tamyra's expression, "my fault," three lines lower down, is substituted for Claudius' "my offence." All the scene between Tamyra and her husband, with its ferocious attack upon the wiles of women—the sex must have given Chapman, and Jonson, too, some very distressful moments—expressed in such a line as,

The errant wilderness of a woman's face,
I read as just another version of the closet-scene, affording further example of Shakespeare's towering supremacy over the men who imitated him. I cannot stop to point out all the verbal imitations ; but it is amusing to note that Hamlet's,

Look here upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers
becomes, in Chapmanese, "thine own dear twin."

The opening lines of Montsurry's last speech before his exit—"Well might he die for thought,"—seems to hark back to "Take thought and die for Cæsar" ; but the speech, as a whole, derives, unquestionably, from the duologue between Hamlet and Ophelia (*Ham.*, iii. 1), of which, being

¹ cf. also *Hamlet*. A pestilent congregation of vapours. (*Hamlet*, ii. 2).

spoken by a man of a woman, it makes a kind of inversion. The passage—

Here was she
That was a whole world without spot to me,
Though now a world of spots ; oh, what a lightning
Is man's delight in woman—

matches Ophelia's lament over her lover "blasted with ecstasy" ; the phrase "when he marries," recalls "If thou dost marry" ; "Disguised like this strange creature" echoes, "God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another" ; and, "to the world sing new impieties," seems to blend "sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh," with the improprieties of mad Ophelia's songs. Finally, the stage direction that follows—*She (Tamara) wraps herself in the arras*—recalls, at once, the concealment of Polonius's daughter, prior to her lover's betrayal.

Then, with the opening of v. 2, ensues a duologue, between Monsieur and Guise, which, before commenting on, I will quote in full.

[*Enter Monsieur and Guise.*]

MONS. Now shall we see, that nature hath no end
In her great works, responsive to their
worths,
That she that makes so many eyes, and
souls,
To see and foresee, is stark blind herself ;
And as illiterate men say Latin prayers
By rote, of heart and daily iteration ;
Not knowing what they say ; so Nature
lays
A deal of stuff together, and by use,
Or by the mere necessity of matter,

Ends such a work, fills it, or leaves it
empty

Of strength or virtue, error or clear truth ;
Not knowing what she does ; but usually
Gives that which she calls merit to a man,
And belief must arrive him on huge riches,
Honour, and happiness, that effects his
ruin ;

Even as in ships of war, whose lasts of
powder

Are laid, men think, to make them last,
and guards,

When a disorder'd spark that powder
taking,

Blows up with sudden violence and horror
Ships that kept empty, had sail'd long
with terror.

GUISE. He that observes, but like a worldly man,
That which doth oft succeed, and by th'
events

Values the worth of things; will think it true
That nature works at random, just with
you ;

But with as much proportion she may
make

A thing that from the feet up to the throat
Hath all the wondrous fabric man should
have,

And leave it headless for a perfect man,
As give a full man valour, virtue, learning,
Without an end more excellent than those
On whom she no such worthy parts
bestows.

MONS. Yet shall you see it here, here will be one
Young, learned, valiant, virtuous and full
mann'd ;

One on whom Nature spent so rich a hand,
 That, with an ominous eye, she wept to see
 So much consumed her virtuous treasury.
 Yet as the winds sing through a hollow
 tree,
 And (since it lets them pass through) lets
 it stand ;
 But a tree solid (since it gives no way
 To their wild rage) they rend up by the
 root ;
 So this whole man,
 (That will not wind with every crooked
 way,
 Trod by the servile world) shall reel and
 fall
 Before the frantic puffs of blind-born
 chance,
 That pipes through empty men, and
 makes them dance¹ ;
 Not so the sea raves on the Lybian sands,
 Tumbling her billows in each others
 necks ;

.

As fortune swings about the restless
 state
 Of virtue, now thrown into all men's
 hate.

This scene is interesting, and important, not only because—read with the lines to be borrowed, in v. 4, from the duologue between Hamlet and Laertes, by the graveside—it gives us, as I think, the written beginning of Chapman's deep interest in Hamlet's character, which leads him to write,

¹ From this point onwards, the speech is taken, as Dr. Boas has noticed, directly from Seneca's *Agamemnon*, ii. 64-72.

later on, a counterblast to Hamlet's revenge, namely, "The Revenge of Bussy," that will form the subject of our next study ; but also for its own sake, as a commentary upon the limitations of Shakespeare's hero, as seen through Chapman's eyes, and as another example of Chapman's supremacy over his rival, as philosopher and metaphysician, however far he toiled behind the Master as dramatist, and as poet. The speeches by Guise and Monsieur, quoted above, are not, perhaps, easily interpreted, in their true relationship with Hamlet ; but I suppose Chapman's mental process to have been somewhat as follows.

Monsieur, always holding, at the back of his mind, Hamlet's oration (ii. 2) delivered to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—argues that nature works blindly and ignorantly, without purpose ; so fashioning man that even his active merits—because uncontrolled, and liable to instantaneous explosion—are no better than powder in a warship, that fired, by a sudden spark, destroys with violence not only itself (himself) but all those powderless (passionless) beings who voyage with him. To which Guise answers, that a mere worldly judgment, such as Shakespeare's in part was, when he conceived "Hamlet," estimating merit and value by no more than the event, may, indeed, think that nature works only at random ; but, he urges, you might as well suppose that nature fashioned a man physically perfect, up to the throat, and then denied him a head, as to hold that she would

Give a full man valour, virtue, learning,
and then—having granted him all this— withhold
from him the means to shape for himself "an end

more excellent than those,"¹ by refusing him the controlling mind, that, instead of succumbing to, shall co-operate triumphantly with the higher forces of the universe. "God is Law" argues Chapman, as did Tennyson, in a later age; and man, in God's image, is potentially capable of fulfilling both Him and it.

Upon this, Monsieur's retorts: "You may be right; but, nevertheless, in Bussy-Hamlet is just such an individual as you have described—

Young, learned, valiant, virtuous, and full-mann'd—

upon whom Nature has poured, with lavish hand, all her treasury of gifts; a man lofty-minded, nobly and consistently avoiding the crooked way; and yet, like a too solid tree, offering so stubborn and unyielding a resistance to the tempests of Fate, that suddenly he falls prostrate before the blast. Therefore, concludes Monsieur,

Nature hath no end in her great works.

That Chapman, when he wrote that passage, had Hamlet in mind, there can be little doubt; and—repeating myself—it is, I think, probable that, in its author's conception of a man perfectly equipped for the battle of life—such as Shakespeare did not quite draw—here spoken of by Guise, we have the basis of that idealized and

¹ Chapman, I think, has particularly in mind the lines, "What a piece of work is a man!" (*Hamlet*, ii. 2) and (*Hamlet*, v. 2):

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends
Rough-hew them how we will";

an inference borne out by Guise's description of the man "heedless . . . without an end," and also by the use of the war-ships metaphor—taken also from *Hamlet*, v. 2—at the conclusion of Monsieur's first speech. We shall see him returning to these themes, and developing them again in *The Revenge of Bussy*.

190 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

perfected Hamlet type, as Chapman conceived him, Clermont by name, in Bussy's sequel, "The Revenge of Bussy"; this idea being supported, *inter alia*, by the close resemblance of this scene (v. 2), which we have been discussing, with the parallel scene, in iii. 4 of "The Revenge of Bussy," undoubtedly imitated from it, in which Hamlet's historic prototype, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, is specifically mentioned, as the perfect exemplar of such a man.

With the entry (v. 3) of the Friar's ghost, and Bussy's—

the good old Friar

Is murder'd ; being made known to serve my love ;
And now his restless spirit would forewarn me
Of some plot dangerous and imminent—

we have, plainly, Hamlet's father, once more ; but after the stage-direction, *Thunders. Surgit spiritus cum suis*, followed, some twelve lines lower down, by this passage—

BUSSY. Who then will my dear mistress send ?

SPIRIT. I must not tell thee.

BUSSY. Who lets thee ?

SPIRIT. Fate.

BUSSY. Who are fate's ministers ?

SPIRIT. The Guise and Monsieur.

BUSSY. A fit pair of shears

To cut the threads of kings, and kingly
spirits,

And consorts fit to sound forth harmony,
Set to the falls of kingdoms : shall the hand
Of my kind mistress kill me ?

SPIRIT. If thou yield

To her next summons, y'are fair-
warned : farewell !—

the theme returns to "Macbeth," and the witches-cum-Hamlet, as the following parallels show.

SPIRIT. I must not tell thee.	WITCHES. Seek to know no more. (<i>Macbeth</i> , iv. 1).
BUSSY. Who are Fate's ministers.	HAMLET. I must be their scourge and minister. (<i>Hamlet</i> , iii. 4)
BUSSY. Kingly spirits, and consorts fit to sound forth harmony.	cf. the exalted poetry uttered by Macbeth and his lady.
BUSSY. Shall the hand of my kind mistress kill me?	cf. Lady Macbeth, and the murder of Duncan.
SPIRIT. To her next summons.	MACBETH. Black Hecate's summons. (<i>Macbeth</i> , iii. 2).

The entry of Montsurry, *like the Friar, with a letter written in blood*, finds Chapman still deep in Macbeth; this passage—

BUSSY. Oh lying spirit!
To say the Friar was dead, I'll now believe
Nothing of all his forged predictions.¹

recalling Macbeth v. 8,

And be these juggling fiends no more believed—
just as

BUSSY. So much elixir of her blood as this
Dropt in the lightest dame—
smells of the sleep-walking scene, while Bussy's—
And makes me apt t'encounter death and hell—
echoes

I will not be afraid of death and bane
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane—

¹ cf. also *Macbeth* iii. 4.

"Now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders in their crowns."

every feather " ; Shakespeare's " deed of dreadful note " by Chapman's " Murder'd " ; Shakespeare's " drowsy hums," by Chapman's " very sleep " ; while Bussy's third line from the end of the speech—

Though entering like so many moving armours—
is, of course, the Birnam wood theme over again.

That line is the last noteworthy echo of " Macbeth," that I have detected in the play, the remainder of " Bussy D'Ambois " being based upon the closing scenes of Hamlet, repeated echoes of which come ringing through the dialogue. These are some of the parallels.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Bussy. . . . Have maimed themselves. | HAMLET. Such maimed rites
(<i>Hamlet</i> , v. 1). |
| Bussy. Is my body then, but penetrable flesh ? | HAMLET. If it be made of penetrable stuff.
(<i>Hamlet</i> , iii. 4). |
| Bussy. Then these divines are but for form, not fact. | cf. Laertes' expostulation to the priest, concerning the " maimed rites " over Ophelia's body. |
| Bussy. Oh, my fame,
Live in despite of murder. | HAMLET. What a wounded name things standing thus unknown shall live behind me. (<i>Hamlet</i> , v. 2). |
| Bussy. With a fit volley for my funeral. | OSRIC. Young Fortinbras . . . To the Ambassadors of England gives this warlike volley. (<i>Hamlet</i> , v. 2). |
| Bussy. For true sign of which unfeign'd remission take my sword. | HAMLET. Fortinbras : he has my dying voice.
(<i>Hamlet</i> , v. 2). |
| TAMYR. Forgive thou me, dear servant, and this hand that led thy life to this unworthy end. | LAERT. Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet. |
| UMBRA. Make the vast crystal crack. | HOR. Now cracks a noble heart.
(<i>Hamlet</i> , v. 2). |

The above parallels shew, quite conclusively, I think, that Chapman's mind has been hovering about the fifth act of " Hamlet," and, at the moment, is particularly interested in the duologues be-

tween the Prince and Laertes—a fact which explains the dense obscurity of Bussy's last speech, that has, hitherto, so baffled the commentators.

O, my heart is broken ;
 Fate, nor these murderers, Monsieur, nor the Guise,
 Have any glory in my death, but this,
 This killing spectacle, this prodigy ;
 My sun is turn'd to blood, in whose red beams
 Pindus and Ossa hid in drifts of snow,
 Laid on my heart and liver ; from their veins
 Melt like two hungry torrents ; eating rocks
 Into the ocean of all humane life,
 And make it bitter only with my blood.
 O frail condition of strength, valour, virtue,
 In me, like warning fire upon the top
 Of some steep beacon, on a steeper hill,
 Made to express it : like a falling star
 Silently glanced, that like a thunderbolt
 Look'd to have stuck and shook the firmament.

Concerning those lines, Dr. T. M. Parrott writes as follows :—

This is a passage to which it seems almost impossible to attach any definite meaning. *This killing spectacle* is, of course, the wounds inflicted on Tamyra. She is the sun of Bussy's life, and the sun is now turned to blood. But we may well ask, with Mr. Boas, what Pelion and Ossa symbolize, and what their melting means. I think, in a general way, the sense of the passage is that under the beams of this bloody sun Bussy feels his life departing and pouring like a stream into the ocean where all human life flows, to add more bitterness to that sea of death. But the grandiose imagery quite obscures the meaning.

Certainly the meaning is hard to follow ; but Pelion and Ossa here symbolize, for me, quite simply, the fact that Chapman has composed this speech from the following lines of "Hamlet," v. 1, a scene with which, as I have already shewn, his mind is much occupied.

LAERT.

O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious
sense

Deprived thee of ! Hold off the earth a
while,

Till I have caught her once more in mine
arms. [*Leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and
dead,

Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

HAML. (*advancing*). What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase
of sorrow

Conjures the wandering stars and makes
them stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers ? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane. . . .

.

Be buried quick with her, and so will I.
And if thou prate of mountains, let them
throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground
Singeing his pate against the burning zone
Make Ossa like a wart ! Nay, an thou'lt
mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Now Chapman, I suspect, stirred, not for the first time, to envy and emulation by the magnificently pictorial rhetoric of these lines, decided, as he has done in earlier scenes of *Bussy*, to try whether he also could not like Shakespeare, make his hero's grief "bear such an emphasis," and fashion for himself another "phrase of sorrow," that—like *Laertes'* so envied by *Hamlet*—would be potent enough to "conjure the wandering stars."

"An thou'lt mouth," opines the admiring Chapman; "I'll rant as well as thou." He does so; and the result is the speech before us, which, although, in Dr. Parrott's words, full of grandiose imagery," is void of appreciable meaning. Shakespeare could touch the loftiest summits of sublimely magnificent verse without the 'smallest sacrifice of meaning or lucidity; Chapman, emulating him, could rarely attain the first without surrendering almost wholly the second; and thus much, even in such instances as these, he could do only by taking to pieces his master's words and ideas, and then transposing, altering, and re-assorting them, into something which, after all, was no more than the shadow of Shakespeare's substance.

To come to details of the parallel, close similarity of circumstance will at once be observed—*Bussy*, like *Hamlet* and *Laertes*, near to a violent death; and the "killing spectacle" (i.e. wounded *Tamyras*) representing *Ophelia* in her coffin. Further, *Laertes'* opening words, "O! treble woe!" are matched by *Bussy's*, "O! my heart is broken!" ; *Hamlet's* "eat a crocodile" by *Bussy's*, "eating rocks"—that last word being borrowed from *Hamlet's* "mountain" metaphor—while the reference to

Pindus and Ossa hid in drifts of snow

is drawn, in part, from Laertes' metaphor, of piling dust upon the grave, until it "o'er tops old Pelion," and, in part, from Hamlet's "millions of acres," that are to make "Ossa like a wart." Again, there is recognizable likeness between these two passages—

Whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers—

and the last six lines of Bussy's speech, already quoted. Moreover, the phrase—

O frail condition of strength, valour, virtue—

has been used already by Chapman, in one form or another, when borrowing from, or aiming at, the Hamlet character. Chapman's method, as we have seen, reminds one of a boy with a jig-saw puzzle ; but it is interesting to note how Shakespeare becomes a cause, not only of wit, but also of grandiosity, however incomprehensible, in lesser poets.

"Bussy" and "Hamlet" having thus been brought simultaneously to a close, it remains only to sum up, in a few words, the significance of this remarkable play, which—as has, I hope, been conclusively shewn—though purporting to be an original historic tragedy, is largely imitated, in action and dialogue, from three of the most popular Shakespearean plays, "Twelfth Night," "Macbeth," and "Hamlet," upon all of which it constitutes, in some sort, a running commentary, both adverse and approving. What circumstances they may have been, that led Chapman to adopt this method of writing his tragedy, we can do no more than surmise ; but

I suppose the production of "Bussy" to be just another episode in the long series of Shakespearean imitations that, following upon a version of "Troilus and Cressida" (1598), in which both Jonson and Chapman are attacked, began with "Every Man Out of His Humour" (1599), imitating and satirizing "Twelfth Night," and "Sejanus" (1603) that was crammed with imitations of "Julius Cæsar." Chapman, handicapped, as a dramatist, by a mind that was always more interested, at bottom, in abstractions than in personalities, with resultant limited capacity for the creation of character, and always, as in the case of his translations of Homer, happiest when he could lean upon, and be guided by, another man's work—may well have concluded that, in wholesale borrowing, cunningly disguised, lay his greatest dramatic strength, and his best chance of winning favourable comparison with the rival master, after whom he toiled in vain. It seems to me, further, probable—though I cannot prove it—that Chapman and Jonson may have colluded in this matter of borrowing, and that Chapman—perhaps with his friend Jonson's connivance—attempted, in "Bussy," to do precisely what Jonson did, in 1599, with "Every Man Out of His Humour," and was to do again, ten years later, with "The Silent Woman," namely to "undo the assured swaggerer"—in this case Shakespeare—by means of a trick. "I will play all his own play before him; court the wench in his garb, in his phrase, with his face; leave him not so much as a look, an eye, a stalk, or an imperfect oath to express himself by, after me."¹

¹ See my "Shakespeare, Jonson, and Wilkins as Borrowers," p. 82.

To what extent, if any, these eulogies and criticisms of Shakespeare's works, by his rival poet of the Sonnets, were recognizably such, to audiences attending stage representations of "Bussy," it is, of course, impossible to say ; but —though such subtleties may have escaped the groundlings, well content with the surface values of their entertainment—one must suppose that the more aristocratic and intellectual frequenters of the playhouse were, in varying degrees, conscious of the imitations ; and followed with interest as keen as that experienced by myself, in working them out—and, possibly, by some of my readers after me—this veiled exposition of Chapman's views upon three of the world's greatest plays ; whether to approve them with applause, or to damn them, with hooting and vociferous dissent.* Assuming that I have interpreted it truly, Chapman's opinion, it will be observed, is exactly such as we should have been led to expect, by our previous knowledge of the intensely idealistic and metaphysical mentality, revealed in his writings as a whole. To this austere philosopher, puritanical by instinct, and correspondingly deficient in native sense of humour, the sinful, smiling revellers of "Twelfth Night" have no human appeal at all ; and, considering them, beside their courtly betters, he openly regrets that a lyrical poet, who could thus waft him to heaven upon the wings of Viola's word-music, is ready, a moment later, to plunge him, with the rest of the audience, down into hell, among Sir Toby and his roystering crew. Again, that a mere court-fool

* The acting versions of Chapman's plays were, doubtless shorter than the printed ones, much as the First Quarto of "Hamlet" is shorter than the Second Quarto. Chapman and Shakespeare alike had readers, as well as audiences in mind.

should be, at one instant a singing lark, at another a bogus clergyman—clowning, moreover, such metaphysical profundities as, “There is no darkness but ignorance”—and, at last, revealed as no better than a jealous, and spitefully vindictive, bully—is, to Chapman’s mind, an unpardonable dereliction by Shakespeare, from the canon of legitimate art; so that, in this matter of “Twelfth Night’s” secondary plot, while the sympathies of an Elizabethan audience would go, in the main, as Shakespeare intended, to the boon companions, with Maria and the fool, Chapman’s interested pity, I infer, was all, and always, with the puritanical steward—in whom, it may be, he saw much of himself—deeply devoted to his mistress’s service, and lofty-souled enough to think nobly, as did the creator, of mankind, and to maintain that lofty concept steadfastly, against all comers, and in every situation.¹

Similarly, concerning “Macbeth,” we have seen Chapman bitterly attacking whatever, in that play, seems to him absurd, inconsistent, or earthy—whether it be the King’s compunctious vainglories, or the grotesque humours of the witches, while paying, at the same time—though, perhaps, by implication and imitation, rather than in more direct eulogy—sincere homage to the poet who could, and did, clothe that drama in verse more majestically grand, and mysteriously haunting, than any other that ever flowed even from that same surpassing mind. Nor must I forget, in this brief summary, to point out, that, given the conditions of secrecy, complete or

¹ If Olivia be accepted as Queen Elizabeth, and her court as that of London, it must be remembered—in part excuse of Malvolio’s infatuation—that making love to the Queen was a necessary preliminary to all advancement at Whitehall.

partial, in which Chapman thus alternately praised, and then be-laboured, his brother poet, we have here, one must suppose, an opinion that is certainly honest, and not—as, for example, may be some of Jonson's written declarations concerning Shakespeare—subject to the suspicion either of doubtful sincerity, or of deliberate double-meaning, that often detracts from the critical value of official eulogia.

Concerning Chapman's uses of, and opinions upon "Hamlet," in this Bussy play, that we have been considering, I will here say nothing ; since the next tragedy with which we are concerned—"The Revenge of Bussy"—continues, almost exclusively, the "Hamlet" theme.

CHAPTER VII

"THE REVENGE OF BUSSY D'AMBOIS" AND "HAMLET."

Chapman, after following "Bussy D'Ambois" with the Biron plays, returned, about 1610, to the "Hamlet" motive, which he had first exploited in the fifth act of "Bussy"; and wrote "The Revenge of Bussy," which is, in effect, less an imitation of, than a deliberate counterblast to "Hamlet," and is an attempt, by Chapman, to set his own idealized "Senecal Man" against Shakespeare's idealized prince of the Renaissance. "The Revenge" teems with concealed comments upon the characters, and the handling, of Shakespeare's play; the pointed reference to Oxford suggesting that Chapman knew the Earl to be the historic original of Hamlet.

"Bussy D'Ambois" was followed, chronologically, about 1607 or 1608, by the two "Biron" plays, with which—preferring to keep the two "Bussy" plays together—I deal in the concluding chapter of this book. The second "Bussy" play did not follow until 1610 or 1611, though one suspects that the success of "Bussy D'Ambois" had kept the possibilities of that theme hovering, since the earlier play was written, continuously at the back of Chapman's mind.

"Bussy D'Ambois," the reader will remember, though more closely related to "Twelfth Night" and "Macbeth," made considerable use of "Hamlet" also, particularly in the last act. Now that story of the Prince of Denmark, with its prominent ethical and metaphysical themes, would, manifestly, be of compelling interest to Chapman. What more natural, therefore, than

that, when sitting down to write a sequel to his earlier play, he should proceed to do thoroughly, in the second drama, what he had no more than started upon in the first ; namely to fashion his own version of " Hamlet," less in imitation of, than in deliberate, and carefully planned, contrast to Shakespeare's work¹ ; though Chapman's imperative need for a model—due to his lack of original creative power—impelled him, as before, to make repeated borrowings from, and paraphrases of, his master ; while his jealousy of, and consequent readiness to join issue with, Shakespeare, induced him, at the same time, to insert also a number of critical comments upon the rival he was matching himself against. Shakespeare's " Hamlet " is the idealized hero, and the culminating achievement of the Elizabethan drama of revenge ; Chapman writing at a time when the Tragedy of Revenge had already run its course, fashioned his hero, not after that impulsive, eccentric, ironic model of the Hamlet kind, but nearer to the classic model, as one full of the first of the Stoic virtues, self-restraint ; Chapman's own ideal figure of the revenger, the " Senecal Man," Clermont D'Ambois. This very fact, that " The Revenge of Bussy " was conceived as a counterblast to Hamlet, mainly accounts, no doubt, for our ignorance of any other direct source of his play, as well as for the unhistorical character of his plot ; the story being eked out with not very relevant matter concerning the arrest of D'Auvergne, who had appeared not long before in the Biron plays, and was therefore fresh in Chapman's mind. Epictetus, Catullus, Sophocles, and other classical

¹ See Dr. Parrott's introduction to " *Revenge of Bussy*," p. 574.

writers, with Grimestone among the moderns, have supplemented Shakespeare, in providing matter for various speeches. Chapman, however, was unable to repeat, with "The Revenge of Bussy," his success in the earlier play, the spirit and life of which, as we have seen, had been largely due to skilful borrowing, and adaptation, from "Twelfth Night," and the rest ; whereas his sequel, being concerned much less with movement and action, than with psychology and metaphysics, so lacked sustaining dramatic interest that the play failed upon the stage. Nevertheless, considered as an exposition of its author's character and views of life,¹ and as his own personal criticism of "Hamlet"—and, incidentally, to some extent, of "Julius Cæsar," and of "As You Like It"—"The Revenge of Bussy" is of such great interest that—heavy reading though some of it may be—I make no apology for the detailed analysis that follows.

Chapman, at the very outset, is careful to provide his text with a concealed hint concerning the purport and origin of his play. In the same way that Jonson, when, just about the same time, he wrote his "Silent Woman," in travesty of another Silent Woman (Viola), and, with his first line—

Have you got the song yet perfect I gave you, boy ?
echoed Orsino's,

If music be the food of love, play on ;

¹ cf. Chapman's dedication of the play to Sir Thomas Howard : "I make it matter of my faith, that we retain an intellectual feeling of good or bad after this life, proportionably answerable to the love or neglect we bear here to all virtue, and truly humane instruction." It is noteworthy that this dedication contains no reference to any charge of imitation, that may have been levelled by Chapman's critics against the play.

so Chapman, with Baligny's first line, commencing "The Revenge of Bussy"—

To what will this declining kingdom turn?—
recalls, at once, the opening theme of "Hamlet," which is the decadence of Denmark, under her new king, Claudius; and hastens directly to an attack upon the ethics and philosophy of Shakespeare's play, with these lines expressive of the moralist's condemnation of murder, as a substitute for due process of law.

Murder made parallel with law! Murder used
To serve the kingdom, given by suit to men
For their advancement! suffer'd scarecrow-like
To fright adultery!—

is, it will be observed, a strange blend of Claudius-cum-the Ghost; "scarecrow-like to fright adultery" being, I take it, a gibe at the Queen's sin, and at the form in which Hamlet's father appears. Renel's opening line—

All things: for as when the high births of kings—
immediately recalls Horatio (*Ham.*, i. 1)

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mighty Julius fell—
while his third and fourth lines—

Deliverances, and coronations,
We celebrate with all the cities' bells
(jangling together in untuned confusion);—
may be, in part, from the king (*Ham.*, i. 2)—

And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruit again—
and, in part from Hamlet's speech (i. 4)—

The kettledrum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

206 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

The parallels continue in the same speech ; for though it may not be obvious at first sight, I suspect that the passage—

All order'd clocks are tied up : so when glory,
Flattery, and smooth applauses of things ill,
Uphold th' inordinate swinge of downright power,
Justice, and truth, that tell the bounded use,
Virtuous, and well-distinguish'd forms of time
Are gagg'd and tongue-tied—

was suggested to Chapman by Marcellus' speech (*Ham.*, i. 1) ;

Tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war ;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week ;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day—

both having the same theme, which is the dislocation of all set "forms of time" (Sunday and week-day) by the necessity for arduous physical work, in the supposed interest of ambitious temporal power. Chapman's strangely involved and cloudy utterance in these plays—of which the last above-quoted passage is typical—though largely the outcome of an intensely mystical mind—may, I think, be partly explainable, as here, by desire, if possible, simultaneously to follow, and to conceal, the source of his inspiration.

Baligny's next speech beginning, "Now all is peace, no danger," though characteristically involved, is a good example of Chapman's lofty

ethical idealism, and of a metaphysical insight much in advance of that possessed by the leading men of his time, not excepting Shakespeare himself. The idea that

Men with giving gifts,
More than receiving, made our country strong,

is close to the wider Christian spirit of to-day ;
and the couplet that follows—

Our matchless race of soldiers then would spend
In public wars, not private brawls their spirits—

is in the best Chapman vein, as an old Elizabethan, and strong sympathizer with that “ thunderbolt of war,” Sir Horace Vere¹ the historic original of Shakespeare’s Horatio. I think it most probable also that the two lines following immediately after—

Not courting strumpets, and consuming birthrights
In apishness and envy of attire—

are, by way of contrast, a slighting reference to Horatio de Vere’s own cousin, Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, the historic original of Hamlet—a noble who, as we have seen, was, during his lifetime, much attacked, if not for “ courting strumpets,” certainly for ill behaviours to his wife ; for consuming his birthright ; and for “ apish ” extravagance of attire.² The con-

¹ cf. Chapman’s poem, *Pro Vere, Autumni Lachrymæ*, 1622.

² This matches exactly Gabriel Harvey’s lampoon, almost certainly aimed at Oxford :

A little apish hat, couched fast to the pate, like an oyster ;
French cambric ruffs : deep with a witness, starched to
the purpose :
Delicate in speech ; quaint in array . . . a passing singular
odd man.

cluding lines of Baligny's speech—

Fame was wealth ;
Best parts, best deeds, were best nobility ;
Honour with worth ; and wealth well got or none
Countries we won with as few men as countries.
Virtue subdued all—

are at once a characteristic reiteration of Chapman's never forgotten conviction, that *virtus*, or virtue, of the Roman sort, will overcome every obstacle ; and also, I think, at the same time, a reply to, and refutation of Hamlet's statement (i. 4)—

Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo—
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault—

virtue, as Chapman argues, being in its nature, the conqueror of vice, the positive, compelling, ever omnipotent force.

The dialogue continues, at intervals, to echo "Hamlet," with such phrases as,

BAL. As you, myself, my lord, will find a time
When to revenge your wrongs,

and Renel's, "I could wish the wrong were righted" ; and there is further obvious parallelism here.

BAL. My brother Bussy's
sister now my wife.

KING. Our sometime sister,
now our queen.
(Hamlet, i. 2).

BAL. Since his apparition.

HORATIO. The apparition
comes.
(Hamlet, i. 2)

BAL. She urges my vow's performance.

GHOST. This visitation is but
to whet thy almost blunted
purpose.
(Hamlet, iii. 4).

This passage, also, contains matter for comment :

BAL. See Monsieur taking now his leave for
Brabant ;

[*Enter Henry, Monsieur, Guise, Clermont, etc., Monsieur taking leave of the king.*]

The Guise, and his dear Minion, Clermont
D'Ambois,

Whispering together, not of state affairs
I durst lay wagers (though the Guise be now
In chief heat of his faction) but of something
Savouring of that which all men else despise,
How to be truly noble, truly wise—

since it recalls Laertes' plea for " leave and favour to return to France," made in the presence of Hamlet, who is watching the incident, and meditating, the while, upon more serious matters ; though the line,

How to be truly noble, truly wise,

I take to be, not a eulogy of Hamlet's character, but Chapman's sneer, made in advance, at the shallow, worldly-wise precepts shortly to be bestowed by Polonius upon Laertes. Monsieur's line, that follows—

See how he hangs upon the ear of Guise,
Like to his jewel—

comes, however, it would seem, not from " Hamlet," but from " Romeo and Juliet " i. 5—

Her beauty hangs upon the brow of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear.

Espernon, the next speaker, carries on the " Hamlet " type of moralizing ; his lines—

210 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Some doctrine of stability, and freedom,
 Contempt of outward greatness, and the guises
 That vulgar great ones make their pride and zeal—
 being in the vein of the "To be or not to be?"
 soliloquy (*Ham.*, iii. 1)—

The oppressor's wrong . . .
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes—

while this, from Monsieur's next speech—

Holding all learning but an art to live well,
 And showing he hath learn'd it, in his life,
 Being thereby strong in his persuading others—

is, I think, another ethical counterblast to the
 calculating worldliness of Polonius' advice to
 Laertes, just previously foreshadowed, though the
 following passage, spoken also by Monsieur—

Once give me leave (for the trial of that
 love

That from thy brother Bussy thou
 inherit'st)

T' unclasp thy bosom.

CLER. As how, sir?

MONS. Be a true glass to me, in which I may
 Behold what thoughts the many-headed
 beast—

seems to "remember" the scene between Brutus
 and Portia, in "Julius Cæsar," ii. 1—

PORT. I have made strong proof of my constancy,
 Giving myself a voluntary wound—

both passages containing the same root idea
 of a trial of love, and both using the "open

bosom " metaphor, which occurs four lines lower down, in " Julius Cæsar "—

BRUT. And by and by thy bosom shall partake
The secrets of my heart.

The glass motive, though occurring also in "Hamlet," is to be found in "Julius Cæsar," i. 2, when Cassius says to Brutus—

I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of yourself which you yet know not of.¹

That same train of thought, linking itself with the mob-motive in "Julius Cæsar," probably induced Chapman to use the words "many-headed beast"; and from the same play, doubtless (*J.C.*, iv. 3), comes Monsieur's line (*Revenge*, i. i. 224)

For Bussy lives not; he durst anger me—
the parallel for which is—

CASS. What, durst not tempt him?

BRUT. For your life you durst not.

Hereabouts the echoes of "Hamlet," though not incessant, are audible in constant succession, Clermont's—

And most expectant hope of all our France—
being very near in feeling to Ophelia's (*Ham.*, iii. 1)—

The expectancy and rose of the fair state—
while all the duologue that follows, between Clermont and Monsieur, seems to be inspired by

¹ Chapman has used this passage in the first Bussy play. See ante p. 179.

212 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Hamlet's talk with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (*Ham.*, ii. 2), in which he reveals to them his knowledge of their treachery. This passage (*Revenge*, i. i. 228)

MONS. Dost understand thyself? I pray thee
tell me

Dost never search thy thoughts, what my
design

Might be to entertain thee and thy
brother?

What turn I meant to serve with you?

CLER. Even what you please to think.

MONS. But what think'st thou?

Had I no end in't, think'st?

CLER. I think you had.

MONS. When I took in two such as you two were,
A ragged couple of decay'd commanders
When a French crown would plentifully
serve

To buy you both to anything i' th' earth—
is close, in spirit, to the "Hamlet" scene, though
few of the lines—excepting, perhaps, Monsieur's,
"Had I no end in't think'st?" comparable with
Rosencrantz's, "To what end, my Lord?"—
bears a strong resemblance to the Shakespearean
text. Later, with Monsieur's speech beginning,
"The most renowned soldier," echoes of Ham-
let's talk with Horatio (*Ham.*, iii. 2) are faintly
audible in Chapman's duologue; this passage—

The most renowned soldier,

Epaminondas, as good authors say,

Had no more suits than backs, but you two shared
But one suit 'twixt you both —

with its sequel, being, in my judgment, Chap-
man's version of Hamlet's speech beginning,

"Nay, do not think I flatter"—the last above-quoted line of Monsieur's, with its "suits" and "backs," recalling, at once—

That no revenues hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee.

This same passage, moreover, gains much additional interest, when we remember that the historic original of Horatio is none other than Sir Horace Vere, the Earl of Oxford's (Hamlet's) cousin, to whom Chapman has already referred flatteringly and openly in this play, but whose identity he chooses here, for discretion's sake, no doubt, to conceal under the name of the poverty-stricken Epaminondas.¹

Continuing, Monsieur's line, "Why do I love thee, then?" fits easily into the same niche; and so does this one, three lines lower down—

Made ye my saucy boon companions—
which reverts, probably, to "Hamlet," i. 2—

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart—
while the line—

Have I blown both to nothing for this bubble?
is drawn, I think, from "Hamlet," iii. 4

I will . . . blow them at the moon—
a reference to the Prince's plot for the destruction of his two false friends. Further, Monsieur's—

Or did the sly Guise put thee
Into my bosom, t'undermine my project?

¹ Similarly the disparaging reference to Oxford (see p. 207) is more or less disguised, whereas the eulogy (post p. 241) names the Earl. Dr. Parrott (note p. 578) holds that Chapman's phrase "no more suits than backs," was suggested by Adian's anecdote (Var. Hist. v. 5). Chapman, probably, had both models (Horatio Vere and Epaminondas) together in mind.

214 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

is a clever mingling of Hamlet's cunning with that of his dupes, and a further borrowing from the same passage above quoted—

I will delve one yard below their mines.

Clermont's reference, a little lower down, to "killing of the King," and his—

You are a king's son born . . . and a king's brother—
introduces a characteristic Chapmanese duologue, between Guise and Monsieur, concerning the vanity of greatness without virtue ; and—whatever the phrase may exactly mean—the futility of laying

the cost

Of any sluttish corner, on a man,

Built with God's finger, and enstyle'd his Temple—

which seems to be again from the Rosencrantz-Guildenstern scene (*Ham.*, ii. 2), wherein Hamlet apostrophizes the "majestical roof," and mankind so "godlike in apprehension." Baligny's comment—" 'Tis nobly said, my lord "—infers another admission by Chapman, of the exalted merit of one side, at least, of Hamlet's character.

At this point (i. i. 320) we come upon a passage so interesting, because, to my mind, packed with allusion, that I must quote it in full.

GUISE. I would have these things
Brought upon stages, to let mighty misers
See all their grave and serious miseries
play'd,
As once they were in Athens and old
Rome.

CLER. Nay, we must now have nothing brought
on stages,

But puppetry, and pried ridiculous antics ;
Men thither come to laugh, and feed fool-
fat,

Check at all goodness there, as being
profaned :

But wheresoever goodness comes she
makes

The place still sacred, though with other
feet

Never so much 'tis scandal'd and polluted.

Let me learn anything that fits a man,¹

In any stables shown, as well as stages.

BAL. Why ? is not all the world esteem'd a
stage ?

CLER. Yes, and right worthily ; and stages too
Have a respect due to them, if but only
For what the good Greek moralist says
of them.

" Is a man proud of greatness or of riches ?

Give me an expert actor, I'll show all

That can within his greatest glory fall.

Is a man fray'd with poverty and lowness?

Give me an actor, I'll show every eye

What he laments so, and so much doth fly,

The best and worst of both." If but for
this then,

To make the proudest outside that most
swells

With things without him, and above his
worth,

See how small cause he has to be so blown
up ;

And the most poor man to be grieved with
poorness,

¹ cf. *Macbeth* : " I dare do all that may become a man."
P

216 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

Both being so easily borne by expert
actors.

The stage and actors are not so contemptful

As every innovating Puritan,
And ignorant sweater out of zealous envy
Would have the world imagine. And
besides,

That all things have been liken'd to the
mirth

Used upon stages, and for stages fitted.
The splenative philosopher that ever
Laugh'd at them all, were worthy the
enstaging ;

All objects, were they ne'er so full of tears,
He so conceited, that he could distil
thence

Matter that still fed his ridiculous humour.
Heard he a lawyer, ne'er so vehement
pleading,

He stood and laugh'd. Heard he a trades-
man swearing

Never so thriftily, selling of his wares,
He stood and laugh'd. Heard he an holy
brother,

For hollow ostentation at his prayers
Ne'er so impetuously, he stood and
laugh'd,

Saw he a great man never so insulting,
Severely inflicting, gravely giving laws,
Not for their good, but his, he stood and
laugh'd,

Saw he a youthful widow
Never so weeping, wringing of her hands
For her lost lord, still the philosopher
laugh'd.

Now whether he supposed all these
presentments

Were only maskeries, and wore false faces,
Or else were simply vain, I take no care ;
But still he laugh'd, how grave so'er
they were.

GUISE. And might right well, my Clermont ; and
for this

Virtuous digression, we will thank the
scoffs

Of vicious Monsieur. But now for the
main point

Of your late resolution for revenge
Of your slain brother.

Now the first line, by Guise, in this long excerpt—

I would have these things
Brought upon stages—

is, I take it, Chapman's plea, that—in his day, when theatres were both newspaper and debating platform—these lofty themes, that we have been touching upon, concerning the nature of man, and his destiny, and, perhaps, also discussion, within the play, of other contemporary plays, are legitimate subjects for stage treatment ; that idea, in my judgment, being borrowed, as usual, from one of Shakespeare's plays ; not, however, as I first supposed, wholly from the play-scene in *Hamlet*—although that scene is coming immediately into our analysis—but rather from "*Twelfth Night*," iii. 4, where Fabian, speaking of the successful plot against Malvolio, says :—

If this were played upon a stage now, I could
condemn it—

218 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

a line that, perhaps, should be read in conjunction with the last two lines of Clermont's next speech—

Let me learn anything that fits a man
In any stables shown, as well as stages—

words which, while shewing descent from

humani nihil a me alienum puto

and echoing perhaps, though faintly, Macbeth's,

I dare do all that may become a man,

is also an affirmation, by Chapman, that, there being in mankind "no darkness but ignorance," he is willing always to imbibe wisdom, even though it come from the mouth, not merely of an actor, standing upon a stage, but of an actor-clown-parson, addressing an actor-madman-steward imprisoned in a dark stable. Here again, it will be seen, the play within the play is a running commentary upon, and by implication, a favourable criticism of, Shakespeare. Going back a little, Guise's words, that follow—

to let mighty misers

See all their grave and serious miseries played,
As once they were in Athens and old Rome—

may have been suggested by Polonius' "killed i' the Capitol," and Clermont's "nothing brought on a stage but puppetry," by Hamlet's, "puppets dallying," from the same scene; just as "pied, ridiculous antics" recalls "pox, leave thy damnable faces," in sound and rhythm, more than in actual words. The whole tenour of this speech of Clermont's seems to me to be, that the coming of any great moral force, such as the soul of Hamlet, or Clermont's own, into a playhouse,

even, makes "the place still sacred," by whomsoever else it may after be "scandal'd and profaned." These speeches, considered from one point of view, are Chapman's version of Hamlet's speech to the players, allied with reflections upon "Twelfth Night" and Shakespeare's other great popular comedy, "As You Like It" now coming into the picture.

The passage that follows—

BAL. Why? Is not all the world esteem'd a stage?

CLER. Yes, and right worthily; and stages too
Have a respect due to them, if but only
For what the good Greek moralist says
of them—

is to me intensely interesting, because it recalls, at once, the lines, in stanza x of Chapman's poem, "A Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy," which are certainly aimed at Shakespeare.¹ The stanza opens thus:—

Muses that Fame's loose feathers beautify,
And such as scorn to tread the theatre,
As ignorant; the seed of memory
Have most inspired, and shewn their glories there
To noblest wits and men of highest doom,
That for the kingly laurel bent affair
The theatres of Athens and of Rome,
Have been the crowns, and not the base impair—

and its first line, as the reader will observe, paraphrases Greene's famous outburst against

¹ Just as stanza vi. of the same poem, almost certainly is at Oxford. The apparent implications of this poem, which I did not observe until this book was already written, are most interesting and important; but I cannot go into them here.

220 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Shakespeare, as "the upstart crow beautified with our feathers," while the second line seems to hint that Shakespeare, at the opening of his career was chary about treading the theatre, as being too "ignorant" a place for a man of intelligence to set foot on.

Referring to—

Is not all the world esteem'd a stage?—

Dr. Parrott, in his edition of Chapman, inserts a note, suggesting that it is "not necessary to suspect (here) an allusion to "As You Like It," the idea being, "As old as the Greek anthology (x. 72) with which Chapman is quite as likely to have been acquainted as with Shakespeare's play first printed in 1623."

With all respect to a scholarship far wider than any to which I can lay claim, I suggest that suspicion of an allusion to "As You Like It" is very necessary indeed; for Dr. Parrott—though, in other respects, he has done his work with admirable skill and thoroughness—has not clearly detected, any more than he did in "Bussy D'Ambois," the Shakespearean imitations and allusions concealed within the play; and it has not occurred to him, therefore, that Chapman—as I firmly believe—is about to give us here, in the midst of his version of "Hamlet," his version also of "The Seven Ages of Man."

The speeches, hereabouts, however, are characteristically mosaic; since the seven lines by Clermont, beginning—

Is a man proud of greatness or of riches?
Give me an expert actor, I'll show all—

are from Epictetus,¹ with, I suspect, an underlying allusion to "Hamlet" iii. 2, on the entry of the Prologue :—

We shall know by this fellow: the
players cannot keep counsel; they'll
tell all.

OPHE. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Epictetus finished with, the echoes from Hamlet are heard again, thus :—

CLER. See how small cause he
has to be so blown up.

The stage and actors are not
so contemptful.

HAMLET. Had he the motive
and the cue for passion that
I have. (*Hamlet*, ii. 2).

Good my lord, will you see the
players well bestowed?

Thence, on the words,

The splenative philosopher that ever
Laugh'd at them all

we get Jaques-cum-Hamlet, the line

ne'er so full of tears,

He so conceited

being a version of

Tears in his eyes . . . with forms to his conceit

while what follows, with its recurring laughter from that same splenative philosopher over the vagaries of the tradesman, holy brother, great man, youthful widow, and so forth, is, I suppose, drawn, in part from "The Seven Ages of Man," and in part from the beginning of the same scene

¹ *Discourses*, iv. 7. 13. Parrott p. 579. The Editor adds that Chapman mistook the meaning of the Greek word for actor, as being used in the technical sense, and not, as Epictetus used it, in the sense of one who plays a part in life. I suggest, however, that the allusion to Hamlet clears Chapman of that mistake, since he was adapting the Greek writer, and Shakespeare also, to his own dramatic purpose.

222 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

(*A.Y.L.I.*, ii. 7) when the "splenative philosopher" (Jaques), tickled to hear,

The motley fool thus moral on the time laughed, "Sans intermission an hour by his dial." Chapman's austerity is, I think, a little shocked by Shakespeare daring to laugh at a moralizer—even at one clad in motley. Sense of the oddities of contrast not being his strong point, such humours are, to him, ridiculous; and the last line of philosopher Clermont's speech—

But still he laugh'd, how grave soe'er they were—
I take to be written in clinching disapproval of Jaques' levity. Dr. Parrot, while regarding the elaboration of this laughing philosopher theme as Chapman's own work, holds that the passage comes, in the first instance, from Juvenal's tenth Satire, ii. 33-35. That may be so—for in the matter of these classical allusions I must defer to writers more scholarly than myself—but concerning Chapman's partial indebtedness here to "As You Like It," in addition, there can, I think, be no reasonable doubt.

Continuing, some twelve lines before the close of i. i, we come upon a passage.

GUISE.

and for this

Virtuous digression, we will thank the
scoffs

Of vicious Monsieur. But now for the
main point

Of your late resolution for revenge

Of your slain brother

which amuses me, as being, apparently, Chapman's veiled apology to himself, or to his audience, for the late "virtuous digression," from "Hamlet"

to "As You Like It," together with a comforting assurance that he now returns to the more serious motive, "revenge of your slain brother,"¹ with which, in a long, and probably borrowed soliloquy, Tamyra opens the second scene of the first act. Only the last line, however,

Breathe out mine

In sighs and kisses, and sad tunes to thine
can I trace to any definite source, namely, in this case, Ophelia ; but the origin of Montsurry's admonition to Tamyra, that follows (*Revenge*, i. 2)—

Still shall adulterous blood affect thy spirits ?—
is, beyond question, the closet-scene from "Hamlet," once more ; this passage, in particular—

together tie

Matter and form, with art and decency ;
So worthiest women should shun vulgar guises,
And though they cannot but fly out for change,
Yet modesty, the matter of their lives,
Be it adulterate, should be painted true
With modest out-parts ; what they should do still,
Graced with good show, though deeds be ne'er so
ill—

being a characteristic paraphrase of Hamlet's speech, beginning—

O, throw away the worser part of it—
best epitomized in the lines (*Ham.*, iii. 4)

Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,

¹ Jonson, likewise, when thus following Shakespeare about, from play to play, uses the same device of noting in his dialogue the change of theme.

Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
 That to the use of actions fair and good
 He likewise gives a frock or livery
 That aptly is put on.

This duologue harps, throughout, upon the closet-scene ; though Tamyra still, occasionally, transforms herself from Queen Gertrude into Ophelia,¹ particularly upon this passage—

MONT. I used me as my soul, to move and rule me.

TAMYR. So said you, when you woo'd.

which I believe to be borrowed from "Hamlet,"
 iii. i—

HAM. I did love you once.

OPH. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Tamyra's line :

Forgiveness ! that grace you should seek of me—
 takes us back to the closet-scene (iii. 4) again :—

Forgive me this my virtue,
 For in the fatness of these pury times
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg ;

and so we reach Tamyra's last speech, before the entry of the soldier, which I quote in full, because it is important, and interesting, as being, I think, an attack, by Chapman, upon Hamlet's "unmanly rage" shewn towards his mother. Quite otherwise, by mild persuasion, argues the author of "Bussy," should the conversion have been brought about.

¹ Many times in the earlier Bussy play Chapman has blended Gertrude and Ophelia—probably with a view to making detection more difficult.

TAMYR. Those with fair warnings might have been
reform'd,

Not these unmanly rages. You have
heard

The fiction of the north-wind and the sun,
Both working on a traveller, and
contending

Which had most power to take his cloak,
from him ;

Which when the wind attempted, he
roar'd out

Outrageous blasts at him to force it off,
That wrapt it closer on. When the calm
sun

(The wind once leaving) charged him with
still beams

Quiet and fervent, and therein was
constant,

Which made him cast off both his cloak
and coat ;

Like whom should men do. If ye wish
your wives

Should leave disliked things, seek it not
with rage,

For that enrages ; what ye give, ye have ;
But use calm warnings, and kind manly
means,

And that in wives most prostitute will win
Not only sure amends, but make us wives
Better than those that ne'er led faulty lives.

This homily is another fine example of Chapman's
supremacy over his contemporaries, Shakespeare
included, as philosopher and metaphysician.
The thought—

Seek it not with rage,
For that enrages ; what ye give, ye have—

226 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

reaches a lofty and wholly Christian ethical standard.

After Baligny's entry, with a challenge, the closet-scene is again boldly introduced, in this passage—

MONT. Negligent traitors ! Murder, murder,
murder !

BAL. Y'are mad. Had mine intent been so like
yours

It had been done ere this.

REV. Sir, your intent,
And action too, was rude to enter thus.

BAL. Y'are a decayed lord to tell me of rudeness,
As much decay'd in manners as in means.

REV. You talk of manners, that thus rudely
thrust

Upon a man that's busy with his wife—
as readers, remembering, "in noise so rude
against me," will at once discern ; but the
closing lines of the act—

BAL. There lie the challenge.

[*They all fight, and Bal. drives in
Mont. Exit Mont.*] ' /

REV. Was not this well handled ?

BAL. Nobly, my lord. All thanks. [*Exit Bal.*]

TAM. I'll make him read it. [*Exit Tam.*]

REV. This was a sleight well mask'd. Oh,
what is man,

Unless he be a politician ?

with their "challenge," "valour," and "policy"
motives are suspiciously reminiscent of "Twelfth
Night," iii. 2.

SIR A. An't be any way, it must be with valour ;
for policy I hate. I had as lief be a
Brownist as a politician.

Act II, opening with a duologue between King Henry and Baligny, is far more original than Act I; though echoes from "Hamlet" float, occasionally, through it; the first that I notice being Baligny's,

I have wrought him to go down
To Cambray with me—

followed by,

When he comes, he may
With some close stratagem be apprehended—
both of which recall the plot to send Hamlet to
England, and (*Ham.*, iv. 3) the

Letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet.

Guise's first long speech, after his entry, beginning, "Far, because besides his valour," epitomizes again the Hamlet character, especially in these lines—

Where this absolute Clermont,
Though, only by his natural zeal to right,
He will be fiery, when he sees it cross'd,
And in defence of it; yet when he lists
He can contain that fire, as hid in embers—

in writing which, Chapman, perhaps, may have had consciously in mind what the Queen said of her son, in i. 5—

Anon as patient as the female dove
His silence will sit brooding :

but Chapman, hereabouts, as attested by his own notes, is borrowing more from Sophocles and Epictetus than from Shakespeare, and there is little in these pages that falls within the scope of this book; though, if Clermont be taken as

228 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

standing at all in Chapman's mind for Hamlet, his defence against Baligny, of "religious Guise's" part in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, is interesting, when we remember the Prince of Denmark's Catholic proclivities,¹ and Oxford's similar tendency. The last fifty lines of the act hark back, in part, to "Hamlet," with,

BAL. appease your great spleen'd sister
For our delay'd wreak of your brother's
 slaughter—

and, for the remainder, to Julius Cæsar-cum-Hamlet, in

BAL. Your virtues past the reaches of this age,
 And ranks you with the best of th' ancient
 Romans—

a passage echoing "thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls," just as Clermont's—

Up he leaps
On Atlas' shoulders : and from thence looks down,
Viewing how far off other high ones creep—

recalls Cassius' diatribe against Cæsar (*J.C.*, i. 2)

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a colossus . . . and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about :

while his, "so rank their breaths," matches Casca's "such a deal of stinking breath," from the same scene.

The opening of Act III seems to be original ; and it is not until Maillard's speech that the borrowings begin, with :—

¹ See ante p. 78-80. See also Dr. Parrott's note p. 581 of his *Chapman*.

It is Virtue's fortune,
To keep her low, and in her proper place ;
Height hath no room for her —

sentiments which, though they may have well applied to Chapman's own worldly fortune, are, perhaps, based, at the same time, upon such phrases from "Hamlet," as, "I lack advancement," and his complaint (*Ham.*, iii. 1) of

the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes.

The most interesting lines, hereabouts, however, are Aumale's,

'Tis safe and common.
The more your friend dares trust, the more
deceive him.
And as, through dewy vapours, the sun's form
Makes the gay rainbow girdle to a storm,
So in hearts hollow, friendship (even the sun
To all good growing in society)
Makes his so glorious and divine name hold
Colours for all the ill that can be told—

which, though I could not at first detect the cunning plagiarism, is, I feel certain, imitated from the following passage, in "Hamlet," i. 2—

KING. How is it that the clouds still hang on you ?

HAML. Not so, my lord ; I am too much i' the sun.

QUEEN. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

Thou know'st 'tis common ; all that lives
must die,

Passing through nature to eternity.

HAML. Ay, madam, it is common.

That last quoted word, "common"—common also to both passages—first gave me the clue to this subtle borrowing ; the central idea of both dramatists—though so differently worded as to possess little surface connection—being, at bottom, the same ; namely that, as a man, though standing in the sun, beneath a rainbow-girdled heaven, may still be exposed to the bursting fury of the storm, so the deceiving glitter of false friendship, such as that of the King for Hamlet, may gild momentarily, meretriciously, the darkest ills. Similarly, Maillard's speech, following on the stage direction *Trumpet within : Drums beat—*

Send for Clermont in whose honour all
This martial preparation we pretend—

echoes the "unforced accord of Hamlet,"

in grace whereof,

No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon-to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruit
again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder.

Thenceforward—excepting Maillard's,

Disguise a brace

Of our best soldiers in fair lackeys' coats,
And send them for him, running by his side,
Till they have brought him in some ambuscado—

which is a return of our old friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—and this, in iii. 2, by Clermont—

Erected many statues, which, he living,
Were broke, and melted into chamber-pots—

suggested, I think, by Hamlet's meditation over Yorick's skull, and by the dust of Alexander stopping a barrel—matter which Chapman has not yet drawn upon, in either play—there is not much visible borrowing, until we come to a passage between Clermont and Charlotte, which runs thus :—

CLER. Shall we revenge a villainy with villainy ?

CHAR. Is it not equal ?

CLER. Shall we equal be with villains ? Is that
your reason ?

CHAR. Cowardice evermore flies to the shield of
reason.

CLER. Nought that is

Approved by reason can be cowardice—

and is interesting for two reasons, first because it is, in my judgment, a counterblast to, and protest against, the spirit of Hamlet's soliloquy, beginning, "O what a rogue," at the close of "Hamlet," ii. 2—in which, as also in Hamlet's speech, the key words are "villain," "coward," and "revenge"—and, secondly, because the passage affords yet another example of the metaphysical elevation of Chapman's thought, above that of any other Elizabethan dramatist ; and of his modernity of mind, as instanced, for example, by a comparison of the above quoted lines with a duologue between Zoe and the Elderly Gentleman, on the "kill or be killed"

232 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

idea, in part iv. 1 of Shaw's "Back to Methuselah." Hamlet argues that, if this player here can "force his soul so to his own conceit," for Hecuba, who, in fact, is nothing to him, then he (Hamlet) must be coward indeed, who, with so strong a "cue for passion," can do nothing better than curse upon it; to which Chapman and Shaw alike give you, in substance, the common answer, that physical revenge is futile. Charlotte, however, argues for action—

Wrong wreakless sleeping,
Makes men die honourless—

but Clermont continues to maintain the anti-Hamlet protest, against blood being revenged by blood :—

No time occurs to kings, much less to virtue ;
Nor can we call it virtue that proceeds
From vicious fury. I repent that ever
(By any instigation in th' appearance
My brother's spirit made,—as I imagined)
That, e'er I yielded to avenge his murder.
All worthy men should ever bring their blood
To bear all ill, not to be wreak'd with good.
Do ill for no ill ; never private cause
Should take on it the part of public laws.

Yet, though Chapman's argument be against Shakespeare's, he must needs borrow his opponent's phraseology, for setting it forth, as witness the following parallels.

CLER. Nor can we call it
virtue.

CLER. I repent that ever . . . I
yielded to revenge his murder.

REN. There will be time
enough.

REN. Sure death delay'd is a
redoubled death.

HAMLET. You cannot call it
love. (Ham., iii. 4).

HAMLET. For this same lord
(pointing to Polonius) I do
repent. (Ham., iii. 4).

I shall find time.

cf. Hamlet's speech, in iii. 2 :—
"Now might I do it pat."

Certain lines from the latter part of Clermont's next speech (iii. 2)—

I tell you, she's the only fashion-monger,
For your complexion, powdering of your hair,
Shadows, rebatoes, wires, tires, and such tricks—
together with—

Though she be dear, lay't on, spare for no cost—
seem to be borrowed, in thought and phrase,
from "Hamlet," iii. 1, upon which Chapman has
already drawn—the first quoted lines being an
echo of, "I have heard of your paintings too,"
and the last recalling Hamlet's vehement censure
of Ophelia, when his outraged soul "lays on" to
the weak and treacherous woman whom he has
loved.

Hereabouts, however, Chapman's fancy—as
we are duly forewarned, by the phrase, "Outlaws
in Arden"—wandering, for an instant, back to
"As You Like It," transforms Charlotte,
momentarily, into a semblance of Rosalind-cum-
Hamlet—

I would once
Strip off my shame with my attire, and try
If a poor woman, votist of revenge,
Would not perform it with a precedent
To all you bungling, foggy-spirited men :
and on the words, "full of sulphur," comparable
with "blasts from hell" (*Ham.*, i. 4), together
with—

but to form one thought,
It is or can be so, would make me mad.¹

¹ cf. again *Ham.*, i. 4. HORATIO. There assume some other
horrible form . . . And draw you into madness.

234 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

invites Renel to a game of chess, leaving Clermont, on the Messenger's entry, to bear us off to the play-scene (*Ham.*, iii. 3), on the lines—

Now comes this plot to trial,
I shall discern, if it be true as rare,
Some sparks will fly from his dissembling eyes,
I'll sound his depth—

the shaping of that last clause being guided, probably, by Hamlet's—

I mine eyes will rivet on his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Maillard's entrance, with—

Your studied welcome to this martial place—
foretells the return of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (*Ham.*, ii. 2), who duly re-appear, in the following dialogue.

CLER. And must they take me ?
MAIL. Take you, sir ? O heaven !
MESS. Believe it, sir ; his countenance changed
in turning.
MAIL. What do you mean, sir ?
CLER. If you have charged them,
You being charged yourself, to apprehend
me,
Turn not your face ; throw not your looks
about so—

the origin of all which is clear ; its key, for the two lines last quoted, being—

There is a kind of confession in your looks, which
your modesties have not craft enough to
colour ;

whereafter the duologue, between Clermont and Maillard, continues in the same vein, as shewn by the phrases :—

CLER. Swear you have nothing.

MAIL. Nothing you seek, I swear—

and by such lines as :—

CLER. If you are charged
By letters from the king, or otherwise,
To apprehend me ; never spice it more
With forced terms of your love.

Continuing, Maillard's, " I'll watch you whether" matches Hamlet's " Nay, then, I have an eye of you " ; and the speech by the Messenger, that follows, is interesting, not only because its second line—

How vain are men's foreknowledges of things—

may be Chapman's comment upon the failure of Hamlet's foreknowledge of the plot woven against him to avert the impending tragedies ; but also because this Messenger-Chorus speech is, alike in form and substance, borrowed from, and bears its author back to, his beloved ancients of Greece, with their sense of fore-ordained, inevitable destiny and doom.¹

Cassandra's prophecy had no more profit
With Troy's blind citizens, when she foretold
Troy's ruin.

Thus Chapman, as borrower, continues to flit, bee-fashion, from bloom to bloom, sipping a little honey from each ; for the next entrants

¹ Æneid ii. 247. Parrott p. 383. cf. Lord Roberts' unheeded warnings before 1914.

236 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

upon the scene—Chalon, with two soldiers—are, in my judgment, drawn from "Henry V," iv. 1 ; that episode wherein the disguised king, on the night before Agincourt, confers with Williams, and two fellow soldiers—Chapman's version running as follows :—

- CHAL. you two only
 Stand for our army.
 IST. That were much.
 CHAL. 'Tis true,
 You two must do, or enter, what our army
 Is now in field for.
 2ND. I see then our guerdon
 Must be the deed itself, 'twill be such
 honour.
 CHAL. What fight soldiers most for ?
 IST. Honour only.
 CHAL. Yet here are crowns besides.

The parallels here may be vague ; but they are, I feel sure, genuine ; whether we take the general theme—two common soldiers here standing for the army, in the presence of an aristocrat, just as, in "Henry V," three do, in presence of the King—or whether one judges by such cue lines as—

- WILL. That's more than we know.
 HENR. His cause bēing just, and his quarrel
 honourable—

and, in iv. 8, to Williams—

- HENR. Fill this glove with crowns,
 And give it to this fellow.

the borrowing being, perhaps, first suggested to Chapman by the fact that Shakespeare's scene, like this ~~one~~, is set in France.

Passing on, to Act iii. 4, we come to a soliloquy from Clermont that is worth attention, as being, I think, another pronouncement by Chapman, against the impracticable futility of Hamlet's character.

CLER. [*solus*] I had an aversation to this voyage,
 When first my brother moved it; and
 have found
 That native power in me was never vain;
 Yet now neglected it: I wonder much
 At my inconstancy in these decrees,
 I every hour set down to guide my life.
 When Homer made Achilles passionate,
 Wrathful, revengeful, and insatiate
 In his affections; what man will deny,
 He did compose it all of industry,
 To let men see, that men of most renown,
 Strong'st, noblest, fairest, if they set not
 down
 Decrees within them, for disposing these,
 Of judgment, resolution, uprightness,
 And certain knowledge of their use and
 ends,
 Mishap and misery no less extends
 To their destruction, with all that they
 prized,
 Than to the poorest, and the most despised.

With the first line of this speech, Clermont, it will be observed, echoes Hamlet's secret "aversation" (aversion) from the deed imposed upon him by his father's spirit; and goes on to argue that even the noblest, and potentially strongest, men—if they do not resolutely, and with steadfast, reasoned determination, make towards a definite end—are heading as certainly towards misery and

destruction, as might the poorest and most despised of mortals. All this seems clear enough; but after the entry of Renel, with a typical indication—"What said a friend to Pompey?"—that Chapman's mind is reverting again to old Rome, we come upon more themes from "Julius Cæsar"; this passage—

CLER. I am engaged, both in my word and hand.

there hung a tail
Of circumstance so black on that composure—

matching the "horrid sights seen by the watch," and other supernatural omens, that so terrified Calpurnia ; while this—

CLER. As I will since I go.

REN. You will then go ?

originates, as I think, from Cæsar's—

The cause is in my will. I will not go.

Upon that line Chapman's borrowings from "Julius Cæsar" end, so far as this play is concerned, Clermont's long speech, that follows, being drawn, I think, neither from "Hamlet," nor from the Roman tragedy, but, almost certainly, from that same scene of "Henry V," (iv. 1) that we saw Chapman making use of in the previous scene (iii. 3), namely the King's moralizing speech on "ceremony." This passage—

For my part, though of noble birth, my birthright
Had little left it, and I know 'tis better
To live with little, and to keep within
A man's own strength still, and in man's true end,
Than run a mix'd course—

conveys the very spirit of Henry's soliloquy, as it does also that of the equally well-known lines, from "Henry VIII," ii. 3—

'Twere better to be lowly born,
And range with humble livers in content,
Than to be perked up with a glistering grief,
And wear a golden sorrow.

The remainder of this speech, together with the three orations by Clermont, that follow it, are so important, so significant in the implications that they lead up to, that, for convenience of reference, I quote them in full.

CLER.

Good and bad hold never
 Anything common ; you can never find
 Things outward care, but you neglect
 your mind.

God hath the whole world perfect made,
 and free,

His parts to th' use of th' all ; men then
 that are

Parts of that all, must, as the general sway
 Of that importeth, willingly obey
 In everything without their power to
 change.

He that, displeased to hold his place, will
 range.

Can in no other be contain'd that's fit,
 And so, resisting th' All, is crush'd with
 it,

But he, that knowing how divine a frame
 The whole world is ; and of it all, can
 name,

Without self-flattery, no part so divine
 As he himself, and therefore will confine
 Freely, his whole powers, in his proper
 part,

Goes on most God-like. He that strives
 t' invert

The Universal's course with his poor way,
 Not only dust-like shivers with the sway,
 But, crossing God in his great work, all
 earth

Bears not so cursed and so damn'd a birth.

REN.

Go on ; I'll take no care what comes of
 you ;

Heaven will not see it ill, howe'er it show.
 But the pretext to see these battles ranged
 Is much your honour.

- CLER. As the world esteems it.
But to decide that, you make me remember
An accident of high and noble note,
And fits the subject of my late discourse
Of holding on our free and proper way.
I overtook, coming from Italy,
In Germany, a great and famous earl
Of England, the most goodly fashion'd
man
I ever saw ; from head to foot in form
Rare and most absolute ; he had a face
Like one of the most ancient honour'd
Romans,
From whence his noblest family was
derived ;
He was beside of spirit passing great,
Valiant, and learn'd, and liberal as the sun,
Spoke and writ sweetly, or of learned
subjects,
Or of the discipline of public weals ;
And 'twas the Earl of Oxford ; and being
offer'd
At that time, by Duke Cassimire, the view
Of his right royal army then in field ;
Refused it, and no foot was moved, to stir
Out of his own free fore-determined
course ;
I, wondering at it, ask'd for it his reason,
It being an offer so much for his honour.
He, all acknowledging, said, 'twas not fit
To take those honours that one cannot
quit.
- REN. 'Twas answer'd like the man you have
described.
- CLER. And yet he cast it only in the way,
To stay and serve the world. Nor did it fit

242 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

His own true estimate how much it
weighed,
For he despised it ; and esteem'd it freer
To keep his own way straight ; and swore
that he
Had rather make away his whole estate
In things that cross'd the vulgar, than he
would
Be frozen up, stiff, like a Sir John Smith,
His countryman, in common nobles'
fashions ;
Affecting, as the end of noblesse were
Those servile observations.

REN. It was strange.

CLER. Oh, 'tis a vexing sight to see a man
Out of his way, stalk proud as he were in ;
Out of his way to be officious,
Observant, wary, serious and grave,
Fearful and passionate, insulting, raging,
Labour with iron flails, to thresh down
feathers
Flitting in air.

Not in the whole of these two Bussy plays that have already afforded so many interesting allusions and comparisons, especially with "Hamlet," nor in any contemporary dramatic imitations of Shakespeare, that I am yet acquainted with, are there to be found any series of passages so packed, in my judgment, with profound significance and meaning, as are those last above quoted. In our study of these two tragedies of Chapman we have come upon many criticisms, and refutations, of Hamlet's character and philosophy, as seen through the eyes of Shakespeare's rival ; but none of them so striking as this in its metaphysical idealism, its relative clarity of expression,

and its direct aim at a great historical character. With the utmost skill, the author of "*Bussy*," granting the axioms that Shakespeare has posed, takes up Hamlet's own ideas, and, almost in his own language, twists them out of their morbid and fatal, though always noble, falsity—as Chapman holds it to be—into an exalted metaphysical statement of fundamental truth, concerning mankind, and the material universe about him. Says Hamlet, to his pair of false friends—

There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so : to me it (Denmark) is a prison . . . indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable ! in action who like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god !—

to which Chapman replies, "I grant you, Shakespeare, indeed, that God hath made the whole world "a divine frame," perfect and free ; but I would have you remember that as you yourself admit in conclusion the divinest part of it all is none other than that "paragon of animals," man himself ; and, therefore—good and bad, though "thinking makes them so," holding, at bottom, never anything in common—the wisely, genuinely good man will identify himself with the cosmic harmonies among which, so "express and admirable," he moves ; and, instead of railing

against himself, as "this quintessence of dust," and against the majestic firmament as a "pestilent congregation of vapours," instead of seeing in Denmark "a prison," and, "unpleased," longing "to range," will adapt his "part to the uses of that all"; which, if he does, he "goes on most God-like." If, however, he declines to do so; but chooses rather, still, as Hamlet did, "unpleased to hold his place"—persistently, even though unconsciously, crossing the divine purpose, and seeking to thwart the Universal course—such a man is, necessarily, cursed from his birth; and, inevitably, must, sooner or later, be shivered tragically into dust."

Thus Chapman sets Shakespeare right; and, personally, while yielding to none in my admiration of the many noble qualities of the Prince of Denmark, I hold the lesser dramatist to have here got the better of the argument. Smoothly as the passages thus run, side by side, I must here set against one another, for comparison, the more obvious verbal parallels, from the first Clermont speech above quoted.

Good and bad hold never anything in common.

How divine a frame the whole world is.

(Man) goes on most god-like.

He . . . dust-like shivers.

HAM. Nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.

HAM. This goodly frame, the earth. (*Ham.*, ii. 2).

In apprehension how like a god. (*Ham.*, ii. 2).

This quintessence of dust. (*Ham.*, ii. 2).

Renel's answer to Clermont's first speech means, I suppose that, granting the latter's argument, there is no need for Renel, or anyone else, to worry concerning his friend's destiny; since, whatever may chance, Heaven will guide the issue, and "guard the right"; but, he adds—

the pretext to see these battles ranged
Is much your honour ;

or, in other words, the ordinary man, nevertheless, will uphold the ordinary procedure, of murder for murder, and counterplot against plot. "I agree" returns Clermont, "since thus the world judges"—and does not the average spectator, at a modern performance of "Hamlet," hold the same opinion to-day ?

Not a whit less important, nor less pregnant in meaning, is Clermont's second speech, in which he panegyricizes the Earl of Oxford and lauds him, as a shining exemplar of "my late discourse,"¹ and as model for the perfect man, who, unlike Hamlet, yielding to no temptation, however seductive, will go his own "free and proper way." But, as we have already seen,² that same Earl of Oxford was, beyond question, Shakespeare's model for Hamlet, and has already been alluded to, in this very play (i. i), in a disparaging comparison with Oxford's friend and cousin, the soldier, Sir Horace Vere—the Horatio of Shakespeare's play—referred to, a second time, in that same scene, as the renowned, though poverty-stricken, soldier, Epaminondas.³ Moreover, we have agreed, I hope, that Clermont himself, in "The Revenge of Bussy," is beyond question, modelled upon Hamlet, and, at the same time, is presented as a kind of rival figure to him. How comes it then, that Chapman, immediately after a passage that closely imitates, while subtly analyzing, Hamlet's character, deliberately introduces Oxford, not, as we should expect, as

¹ i.e. Clermont's preceding speech.

² In chapter iv.

³ See ante p. 212.

246 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Hamlet's original, but as a chosen example of the perfect super-Senecan man, that Hamlet ought to have been, but was not ?

The problem is a somewhat complex one ; and Dr. Parrott—not having penetrated into the real inwardness of these Hamlet complications, that we have been tracing out—makes no attempt to solve it ; but writes, simply : “ I know of no special reason why Chapman should have chosen this special opportunity to panegyryze the deceased Earl.” I venture, however, to suggest a special reason ; which is this. Chapman, as we have seen¹—and shall see again, further on—when he is imitating Shakespeare's plays, has a trick of providing clues to the historic identities of the original models, whom Shakespeare had in mind. Chapman, of course, must have known, perfectly well, that Hamlet was based upon Oxford ; nor have I any doubt that some of “ the clever ones,” in London—as Affery Flintwinch, in “ Little Dorritt,” would have dubbed them—knew it also, and knew, further, that “ The Revenge of Bussy ” was an imitative counterblast to Hamlet. They may even have guessed that Oxford himself was aimed at by Chapman, in the passage already quoted—²

Not courting strumpets, and consuming birthrights
In apishness and envy of attire.

Chapman, however, would not, presumably, wish these truths to be too generally known, any more than Wilkins, for example, would positively advertise the fact that his “ Pericles ” owed much to some half dozen Shakespearean plays. It was

¹ cf. pp. 17 and 269-71 for Queen Elizabeth as Olivia, and Essex as Richard II. ²

³ See ante p. 270-71.

more convenient to be able, if necessary, plausibly to deny charges of personal attack upon, or of extensive plagiarism from, great nobles, or famous contemporary writers. Chapman, indeed, very possibly, may have been challenged, in this matter, by the succeeding Earl of Oxford,¹ or by members of his family; and I suggest that during a revision of the play,² perhaps, its author decided that he could best safeguard himself by the bold stroke of openly introducing—through the mouth of a character, Clermont, who, in this drama, thus stands both for and against Hamlet—a eulogy of the very man from whom he well knew Hamlet to be drawn, presenting him, in this instance as the ideal prince, whom Shakespeare might have conceived and written of, had his psychology and metaphysics ever reached the high level of Chapman's attainment. Whatever the truth of the matter be, this scene, in my judgment, definitely identifies Oxford as the original of Hamlet.

Returning to the text of "Bussy," the reference, in Clermont's third speech, to Oxford's determination to

make away his whole estate³

In things that cross'd the vulgar—
rather than follow the common, and slavish,
practice of the average nobleman, accords exactly
with his behaviour, inquitting the court, in 1589,
and passing the remainder of his life in tranquil
literary pursuits, at Hackney.

¹ The 17th Earl referred to in this play, had died in 1604.

² The many analogies of this scene with v. 2 of "Bussy D'Ambois" (q.v.) suggest that Chapman had that scene from his earlier play strongly in mind when first writing or revising "The Revenge."

³ Oxford was often charged—not without reason—with having squandered the family estate.

248 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Clermont's last quoted speech, beginning, "O, 'tis a vexing sight," I interpret as a parting shot, by Chapman, at Hamlet's temperamental vagaries, the last two lines—

Insulting, raging,¹

Labour with iron flails to thrash down feathers
Flitting in air

being, I take it, another criticism of the closet-scene, wherein Hamlet, in Chapman's view, uses needlessly heavy weapons of offence, for the crushing of that butterfly creature, his mother.

Clermont's next speech contains a passage which is almost a translation of the Discourse of Epictetus, iv. 10 :—

If you would consul be, says one, of Rome,
You must be watching, starting out of sleeps ;
Every way whisking ; glorifying plebeians :
Kissing patricians' hands ; every day bestow
Gifts and observance upon one or other ;
And what's th' event of all ? Twelve rods before
thee ;
Three or four times sit for the whole tribunal ;
Exhibit Circean games ; make public feasts ;
And for these idle outward things (says he)
Would'st thou lay on such cost, toil, spend thy
spirits

.

No pains wilt thou bestow ? no cost, no thought ?
but I have little doubt that these lines, nevertheless, were brought to Chapman's mind by their close resemblance to the theme of Hamlet's talk with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, in ii. 2—
"I lack advancement," and so forth—and,

¹ The attack on Oxford in stanza vi. of Chapman's "A Coronet for his Mistress, Philosophy" refers to his "Protean rages."

particularly, with Hamlet's speech to Horatio, in
iii. 2, "Nay, do not think I flatter"—the phrase,
spend thy spirits,

And to be void of perturbation
recalling exactly :—

That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
and, therewith, Horatio's serenity—

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing—
so much envied by his friend—just as, doubtless,
the same quality, in Horatio Vere, was envied by
his less equable cousin, the Earl of Oxford. The
lines—

Three or four times sit for the whole tribunal ;
Exhibit Circean games

are also pointed, in this connection, when we
remember Oxford's early prowess as a jousting knight
at court, his love of plays, and of players, and the
fact that he sat on the tribunal that judged Mary,
Queen of Scots, in 1586.

Chapman, like Jonson, in similar case, never
knew when he had said enough. It is not
surprising, therefore, that Clermont's speech,
closing this third act—

Chance what can chance me, well or ill is equal
In my acceptance, since I joy in neither ;
But go with sway of all the world together.
In all successes, fortune and the day
To me alike are ; I am fix'd, be she
Never so fickle ; and will there repose,
Far past the reach of any die she throws—

is just another paraphrase of the Horatio theme—

A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks •

250 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

commending him who will never be,

a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she pleases.

The fourth act, of "The Revenge of Bussy," is, as we should expect, comparatively free of borrowings from "Hamlet," since, by this time, its author has almost exhausted the theme ; and it seems that, excepting an occasional loan from Epictetus, or other classical writer, Chapman has contrived, hereabouts, to be as original as he is, consequently, dull, in a series of scenes crammed to bursting with windy idealism, and sententious metaphysics ; but almost wholly devoid of genuine dramatic value. To me, the most interesting passage is Guise's second speech, in iv. 3, addressed to King Henry, and eulogizing Clermont-Oxford-Hamlet-Horatio as an inexorably Senecal-Stoical man, impervious and indifferent to the vagaries of Fortune.

In his most gentle and unwearied mind,
Rightly to virtue framed ; in every nature ;
In his most firm inexorable spirit,
To be removed from anything he chooseth
For worthiness ; or bear the best persuasion
To what is base, or fitteth not his object ;
In his contempt of riches and of greatness. . . .

Clermont's penultimate speech, in iv. 5, before the entry of Aumale "with a cabinet," beginning—

'Tis so ; rank custom wraps men so beyond it ;
And as 'tis hard so well men's doors to bar
To keep the cat out, and th' adulterer

seems to be from "Hamlet," iii. 2, echoing the King's, "O, my offence is rank" ; and Hamlet's

If damned custom have not brass'd it so (*Ham.*, iv. 3)

while the origin of such lines as Renel's—

prepare you now to please
Th' unrested spirit of your slaughter'd brother

.
His apparition show'd it . . .

and Baligny's

The late jesting Monsieur (Polonius?) . . . being
dead—

is easily guessed at.

The stage direction for the opening of Act V—
Ascendit Umbra Bussy—prepares us for echoes of
Hamlet's father, which, in fact, become audible
with the opening lines¹ :—

Up from the chaos of eternal night,
. . . once more I ascend,
And bide the cold damp of this piercing air,
To urge the justice whose almighty word
Measures the bloody acts of impious men
With equal penance—

all deriving in word or substance, from "Hamlet,"
i. 4—

HAM. The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold,
HOR. It is a nipping and an eager air—

and from i. 5, with its burden of penance for
bloody acts—

Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away.

¹ Dr. Parrott has a note, p. 586. "This speech is modelled upon such Senecan prologues as those of Thyestes and Agamemnon." This fact, however, does not, in my judgment, preclude the simultaneous use of Shakespearean models. Jonson more than once mingled borrowings from Shakespeare with others from classical authors.

252 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

In its recognition of Roman Catholicism, the tenour of this speech, by Bussy's ghost—

All the Christian world
And all her laws, whose observation
Stands upon faith, above the power of reason—
with the lines that precede and follow it, equally
recalls the orthodoxy of the spirit of Hamlet's
father¹ ; and Guise's

That admired voice
That at the barricadoes spake to me,
No person seen, " let's lead, my lord, to Rheims " ?
is an amusing reminiscence of the castle walls at
Elsinore, and of Hamlet's wild cry—

" I say, away ! Go on, I'll follow thee.

This passage, also from v. 1—

GUISE. Why stand'st thou still thus, and apply'st
thine ears

And eyes to nothing !

CLER. Saw you nothing here ?

GUISE. Thou dream'st awake now ; what was
here to see ?

CLER. My brother's spirit, urging his revenge.

GUISE. Thy brother's spirit ! Pray thee, mock
me not—

is yet another borrowing from the closet-scene
(*Ham.*, iv. 3)—

QUEEN. Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy ?
and

HAM. Do you see nothing there ? . . .
My father in his habit, as he lived

¹ See ante p. 79.

though the "pray thee, mock me not" was probably suggested by an earlier scene (i. 2)—

HAM. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow student ;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Clermont's speech, that follows, containing the lines—

You make amends for enmity to him
With ten parts more love, and desert of me ;
And as you make your hate to him no let
Of any love to me—

almost epitomizes Hamlet's plea to his mother, to choose virtue, and her son's love and allegiance, before loyalty to an adulterous bed. Throughout this part of v. 1 occur many other Shakespearean echoes, such as—

GUISE. A man, that (only since his looks are raised

Upwards, and have but sacred heaven in sight)

Could bear a mind so more than devilish—

which seems to be drawn from Claudius, seeking in vain, with face turned to heaven, pardon for the sin that, while dreading its consequences, he is yet unwilling to renounce. After the entry of Aumale, we come upon another passage—

CLER. How took my noblest mistress the changed news ?

AUM. It came too late, sir, for those loveliest eyes
(Through which a soul looked so divinely loving,

Tears nothing uttering her distress enough)

She wept quite out, and like two falling
stars

Their dearest sights quite vanished with
her tears.

CLER. All good forbid it.

GUISE. What events are these ?

CLER. All must be borne, my lord, and yet this
chance

Would willing enforce a man to cast off
All power to bear with comfort, since he
sees

In this our comforts made our miseries.

GUISE. How strangely thou art loved of both the
sexes ;

Yet thou lovest neither but the good of
both.

CLER. In love of women my affection first
Takes fire out of the frail parts of my blood.
Which till I have enjoy'd is passionate,
Like other lovers' ; but, fruition past,
I then love out of judgment—

all of which I take to be an adroitly concocted adaptation of lines from "Hamlet," ii. 1, wherein Ophelia tells her father how Hamlet, piteously sighing, "seemed to find his way without his eyes," linked with ideas from "Hamlet," iii. 1—the scene between Hamlet and Ophelia, of which it may be truly said that the lovers' "comforts are made their miseries"—and also with the closet-scene, once more ; Clermont's line : "I then love out of judgment" coming from "love . . . at your age . . . waits upon the judgment." The couplet—

How strangely thou art loved of both the sexes ;
Yet thou lovest neither but the good of both

is interesting, as a recognition, by Chapman, of the universal loveliness of Hamlet's character, as depicted by Shakespeare, and a commendation of the prince's longing to find virtue in the women he loves ; while Clermont's line near the end of v. 1—

By no means justly can be construed love—is, I suppose, Chapmanese, for Hamlet's, " You cannot call it love."

Passing to the fourth scene of Act V, Guise's opening soliloquy, upon death, commencing, " Who says that death is natural ? " may have been written, one surmises, with Claudius' diatribe, in iii. 1, of " Measure for Measure," consciously in mind¹ ; Shakespeare's phrases, " thick-ribbed ice," and

The delighted spirit to bathe in fiery floods—becoming, respectively,

Melting like snow within me, with cold fire, and " spirit free, manly, princely," etc. ; while Shakespeare's conception of that same spirit, as " imprison'd in the viewless winds," Chapman transmutes into,

Who would live sinking in it, and not spring

Up to the stars, and leave this carrion here ?—it being thoroughly characteristic of Shakespeare's rival, that he should regard the king of terrors from a point of view opposite to, and much more metaphysical than, that taken by the author of " Measure for Measure." Guise's phrase, in his next speech, concerning " tossing

¹ He had used this speech before, in " Byron's Conspiracy." See post p. 264-7.

256 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

souls into the sky," I take to be a clumsy paraphrase of,

blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world.

Thenceforward, to the end of the play, such borrowings from "Hamlet" as may be discoverable, are of little note ; the last interesting one being, very significantly, Henry's, " Your so wounded faith," in which is audible an echo of Hamlet's last words—

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me.

Here we bring to a close our enquiry into the inner meaning of these two strange and intricately woven plays, in the course of which three, and more, Shakespearean dramas are made so free with. Chapman's opinion, in part, of two of them—" Twelfth Night " and " Macbeth "—as revealed in his text, was epitomized at the close of the last chapter ; and in i. 1 of " The Revenge of Bussy " we have recognized his austere disapproval of the levity of that " splenetic philosopher," Jaques, of " As You Like It," in daring to turn all to laughter—even the moralizing of a motley fool. It remains only to sum up the impression that, judging by Chapman's treatment of Bussy, and of Clermont, the play, " Hamlet " seems to have left upon his mind.

That, at bottom, he immensely appreciated the most powerful melodrama ever written, and recognized gladly the moral grandeur, and the lofty nobility of soul, that shine through its principal figure, there can, I think, be no doubt

whatever ; any more than that he envied equally the great, and instant, popularity of the piece. Had it been otherwise, Chapman could not have joined—as it seems that he did—the mild conspiracy then afoot—about the end of the first decade of the 17th century—to supplant, or to supplement, if possible, by secret imitations, the masterpieces of the already silent master. Of Shakespeare's poetry, no less than of his drama, Chapman, quite certainly, realized the full merit ; and we have seen him, in the first Bussy play, vainly, pathetically almost, striving to fashion for his hero a " phrase of sorrow " and an " emphasis of grief," that, as poetical rhetoric shall match in grandeur the lines given to the Prince and Laertes.

It is however in this " Revenge of Bussy " that Chapman has most deliberately, and most broadly, challenged the ethics of Shakespeare's " Hamlet " ; not merely by such criticism as that in i. 1, against the superficially calculating worldliness of Polonius' advice to Laertes, but, from the play's opening lines, with direct challenge to the glorification of " murder made parallel with law," and to the attempted crushing of villainy by villainy—challenge, in fact, to the general theory, that physical revenge can ever be other than futile, and that private quarrel may legitimately invade the prerogatives of public law. Thoroughly self-consistent, as revealed in these plays, is Chapman's convinced belief in the ultimate triumph of the ordered mind ; since no less strongly than he denounces violence in action, does he deprecate also violence of word, deploring, in both plays, what is—to his view—the ferocious cruelty of Hamlet's verbal assaults upon Ophelia

258 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

and his mother, and the needless bringing forth of so formidable weapons of rhetoric, for the breaking of two such mere butterflies as these. Rage engenders rage, he argues ; and erring women will be sooner won back by gentle admonition, than by transports of fury, however eloquent ; all which is true, although Chapman's opponents may here score a legitimate debating point against him, by recalling—as indisputably they may—the deep and touching filial tenderness, which, almost throughout the closet-scene, underlies Hamlet's morally indignant denunciation of the sensuous, and sinning Queen.

Lastly, we have seen Chapman urge the necessity, even in the noblest and strongest men, for resolute purpose, and steadfast, unflagging pursuit of a well-chosen course, failing which all human fate—whether Hamlet's, or that of the poorest and most despised of beings, heads, inevitably, towards disaster and destruction ; whereas the genuinely good man—firm of purpose, as Hamlet and Macbeth were infirm—identifying himself, individually, with the moral order of the universe, and working in harmony with the divine mind, journeys serenely on, towards a beatific, if still mysterious, end.¹

Thus Chapman seems to regard Shakespeare's most popular, and eternally human play ; and—had the dramatic power, and human appeal, of his tragedy been but levelled to its ethical and philosophical heights—"The Revenge of Bussy,"

¹ In Chapman's "Revenge of Bussy," Clermont, its stoical hero, regretfully commits the act of revenge upon Montsurry, and then, hearing of the murder of his friend and patron, the Duke of Guise, by order of the French King, commits suicide—a denouement quite foreign to the conventional finish of an Elizabethan Revenge play.

instead of "Hamlet," might be acclaimed to-day as the world's noblest melodrama. Playgoers down the ages, however, caring little for philosophical abstractions on the stage, but a great deal for character, colour, story, clarity, humour, movement, action, and beauty—for all, in fact, that charms, while it mirrors dramatically human life—rejected the imitators' metaphysical study, in favour of the originator's universal drama. We recognize the exalted mind of Clermont's creator ; we accord to him, in metaphysics, as in philosophy, a degree higher than his upon whom Chapman modelled these two tragedies, that we have been examining ; but farther than that we cannot go. The average man—and it is for the average man that the theatre as a national institution exists—prefers ever the sunlit valley, to the frozen heights. His heart must be touched before his head ; and that is why while the one dramatist, austere and exalted, claims rightly our deep interest, and our profound respect ; the other, alike in the crowded playhouse, and upon the printed page, adorable, peerless, serenely triumphant, takes, and holds for ever undisputed possession of us all.

CHAPTER VIII

SHAKESPEARE, AND CHAPMAN'S BIRON PLAYS.

Chapman's double Biron play, "The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Biron"—his contribution to the many conspiracy dramas published in the first two decades of the seventeenth century—contains passages imitated from "Measure for Measure," "Henry V," and "Hamlet"; but by far the most important borrowings are from "Richard II," the last act of "Biron's Tragedy" being imitatively based upon the deposition scenes of that play. Pointed references in "The Tragedy" to the Earl of Essex suggest that Chapman may have known that nobleman to be a contemporary historic original of Richard II.

HAVING investigated, at length, in the three preceding chapters, the complex and important connections between Chapman's two "Bussy" plays, and several of Shakespeare's, I will conclude this book with a brief study of Chapman's indebtedness to his rival, in two more dramas, or rather in a double drama, "The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles Duke of Biron," which was written late in 1607, or early in 1608, and first acted and published during that year, thus occupying chronologically, an intermediate position between "Bussy D'Ambois" and "The Revenge of Bussy."¹ Both the Biron dramas deal with the Duke's conspiracy against his king, Henry IV of France, for which, after trial and conviction for high treason, he was beheaded in the Bastille, on July 31, 1602. The distinguished services rendered by Biron to Henry, for whom

¹ I thought it better to keep the two Bussy plays together.

he fulfilled a diplomatic mission to England, which is made use of in the play—and his subsequent historic connection—as the son of an even more famous father—with the same French and English groups from whom we have seen both Shakespeare and Chapman choosing the characters of “*Love’s Labour’s Lost*,” “*Twelfth Night*,” and the two Bussy plays, make him a very natural subject for treatment by Chapman, at a time when conspiracy plays were highly popular upon the English stage, their vogue having been started, perhaps, by “*Richard II.*,” which was played on the eve of the Essex conspiracy, and continued by “*Julius Cæsar*,” which, no doubt, under the thin disguise of Roman names, dealt with that conspiracy, and while eulogizing its leaders, as Brutus, Cassius and the rest, shewed also the justice of their dooms. Jonson’s “*Sejanus*” (1603), as I have shewn elsewhere, was a satirical counterblast to “*Julius Cæsar*”; “*Catiline*” (1611)—also almost equally full of borrowings from “*Julius Cæsar*”—carried on the same theme, and Chapman, having meanwhile come into line, with the “*Biron*” plays, set them neither in Rome nor England, but, like the “*Bussy*” dramas, in France, now, by the march of events, less hostile to England than of old. The secret of this conspiracy theme’s prominence, for so many years, upon our stage was, without doubt, the immense sensation caused in London by the Essex revolt, and the tragic death of its popular young leader. That event set the dramatic fashion : the theme—effective, because full of conflict, upon the stage—caught on, and was probably encouraged by James I, and by his ministers, who—in the same

way that Elizabeth had looked with favour upon Shakespeare's great sequence of historical plays, attacking Romanism, exalting patriotism, and glorifying the reigns of her Lancastrian progenitors—themselves also approved, within reason, and subject to strict censorship, a series of dramas depicting the disastrous consequences of conspiracy against lawfully established thrones.¹

The Biron plays, however, have not reached us in their original form ; for the French ambassador, La Boderie, present at the first production of "The Conspiracy," protested strongly against such an episode in French history being thus put upon the stage ; and caused three of the actors to be arrested, though "the principal person, the author, escaped."

Chapman, then, it seems, was spared ; but his plays were not. In Dr. Parrott's words, "The censor's hand fell heavily upon them" ; the scenes representing Biron's visit to England were suppressed, or mutilated, and the fourth act of "The Conspiracy" was practically struck out—an event much to be regretted ; the more so if, as is possible, though not, perhaps, very probable, Chapman had included the scene, from Matthieu, of Elizabeth pointing out to Biron the blackening heads of Essex and his fellow-traitors, as a warning, to the King of France, against indiscriminate clemency. Who knows, moreover—in addition to the intrinsic interest of such scenes from Chapman's pen—what fascinating references to, or implied, if secret, comments upon Shakespeare's work, that heavy-handed censor of 1608 may have deprived us of ? Significant refer-

¹ I have before me a list, prepared by Mr. William Poel, of some 20 conspiracy plays produced between 1594 and 1620.

ences to Essex, however—as the reader will discover later on—have not been wholly eliminated from the play ; and that Chapman, right from the opening of “*The Conspiracy*,” had historic enterprises against established order in his mind, is attested by Picoté’s words in i. 2,

Spread here this history of Catiline,¹

That earth may seem to bring forth Roman spirits followed, five lines lower down, by the entry of Biron, to loud music, who delivers himself of a long soliloquy, parts of which I had lined in the margin, as being remarkable, long before I came to examine with any care, or indeed to be conscious of, the huge indebtedness of Chapman’s plays to Shakespeare. Nor, let me add at once, are these two dramas based upon, or concerned with, Shakespeare, to anything like the extent of “*Bussy D’Ambois*,” which preceded them, or “*The Revenge of Bussy*,” which was to follow. The fabric of their story is taken, and many lines are borrowed, almost verbatim, from Grimestone’s “*General Inventorie of the History of France*,” drawn from the French writers, Jean de Serres, Pierre de Matthieu, and others, and published in 1607; Chapman’s method, relative to Grimestone, being very analogous to that of Shakespeare with North’s Plutarch, in the Roman plays. This much, however, seems to me certain—and I shall now endeavour to prove it—that Chapman had some of Shakespeare’s plays, historical and other in mind when he wrote these two dramas

¹ Jonson’s “*Catiline*,” like his “*Sejanus*,” teems with imitations from “*Julius Cæsar*,” and, in its lighter scenes, contains many from the Katherine and Petruchio duologue in “*The Taming of the Shrew*.” Lack of space, however, has compelled me to eliminate a chapter, which I had written, setting these forth in detail.

around the close of Biron's career. Let me begin my proof by quoting Biron's speech, in i. 2, to which allusion has already been made :—

What place is this ? what air ? what region ?
 In which a man may hear the harmony
 Of all things moving ? Hymen marries here
 Their ends and uses, and makes me his temple.
 'Hath any man been blessed, and yet lived ?
 The blood turns in my veins, I stand on change,
 And shall dissolve in changing ; 'tis so full
 Of pleasure not to be contain'd in flesh,
 To fear a violent good, abuseth goodness ;
 'Tis immortality to die aspiring,
 As if a man were taken quick to heaven ;
 What will not hold perfection, let it burst ;
 What force hath any cannon, not being charged,
 Or being not discharged ? To have stuff and form,
 And to lie idle, fearful and unused,
 Nor form nor stuff shows ; happy Semele,
 That died compress'd with glory ! Happiness
 Denies comparison of less or more,
 And not at most, is nothing ; like the shaft
 Shot at the sun by angry Hercules,
 And into shivers by the thunder broken,
 Will I be if I burst ; and in my heart
 This shall be written : " Yet 'twas high and right."

My first careful reading of this speech found its thought and cadences ringing familiarly in my ear ; such phrases as, " I shall dissolve in changing," and—

To fear a violent good abuseth goodness—
 reminding me, instantly, of a Shakespearean passage quoted wherever the English language carries, namely Claudio's outburst to his sister,

Isabella, when she would make his death a lesser thing than her dishonour, and the boy shrinks from the sacrifice (*M. for M.*, iii. 1).

Ay, but to die ; and go we know not where ;
 To lie in cold obstruction and to rot ;
 This sensible warm motion to become
 A kneaded clod ; and the delighted spirit
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
 In thrilling region of the thick-ribbed ice ;
 To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,
 And blown with restless violence round about
 The pendent world ; or to be worse than worst
 Of those that lawless and incertain thought
 Imagine howling.—'Tis too horrible !
 The weariest and most loathed worldly life
 That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
 Can lay on nature is a paradise
 To what we fear of death.

A comparison of this passage—which, as we have seen, Chapman had already imitated in v. 4 of "The Revenge of Bussy"—with Biron's speech last above quoted, convinced me that Chapman was here paraphrasing lines, which—because their metaphysical theme and manner are akin to Chapman's own—must have won from him a sincere, if rather envious admiration ; and was here penning an apotheosis of death, in direct challenge to Claudio's execration of it. These lines—

Hath any man been blessed and yet lived ?
 . . . 'tis so full
 Of pleasure not to be contain'd in flesh—
 though, in a literal sense, nearer to Hamlet's,
 O ! that this too, too solid flesh would melt—
s

than to Claudio's words, are, I think, a direct antithesis to the death speech of "Measure for Measure," and constitute an expression of belief that the delighted spirits of this earth need not, necessarily, part with that delight, when they "dissolve in changing." Chapman believes in the continuance of divine benevolence towards man, after, as well as before death, and, though destiny "burst him into shivers," he will yet say of her, "'Twas high and right." Here the stage direction, *Music again*, joined with a remembrance of Claudio's, "Imagine howling," recalls the phrase, "howling after music," and "music of the spheres," both from "Twelfth Night"; and it is interesting to note that, in the Biron play, as well as in "Measure for Measure," the temptation-motive is present, Picoté, whose speech precedes Biron's, being, in the words of Roiseau, "The tempter of our duke."

Further on in the same scene (i. 2), at the opening of Biron's third speech, after his entry with Picoté, occurs another passage, even more obviously borrowed from, or suggested by, that same speech of Claudio.¹

BIRON. Oh, 'tis a dangerous and a dreadful thing
 To steal prey from a lion; or to hide
 A head distrustful, in his open'd jaws;
 To trust our blood in other's veins; and hang
 'Twixt heaven and earth, in vapours of
 their breaths;
 To leave a sure pace on continue earth,
 And force a gate in jumps, from tower
 to tower,
 As they do that aspire from height to height.

¹ Jonson also frequently imitates the same passage of Shakespeare twice in the same play.

Here Chapman's metaphor of a head, thrust into the open jaws of a lion, is just a synonym for death, which, reversing the thought of the earlier speech, and siding, this time, with Shakespeare, he now describes as "a dreadful thing," thus paraphrasing Claudio's "Death is a fearful thing." Further, the couplet—

To trust our blood in other's veins ; and hang
'Twixt heaven and earth, in vapours of their
breaths ;

is paralleled by,

To reside
In thrilling regions of the thick-ribbed ice ;
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds—

both passages employing the human-body metaphor—"veins" in one case, and "ribs" in the other ; both conveying the idea of imprisonment within some alien substance ; and both suggesting wide airy spaces—" 'twixt heaven and earth in vapours" echoing "viewless winds," as abiding places of the soul ; while the three last quoted lines of the speech reiterate Claudio's idea of the danger of leaving

a sure pace (? place) on continue earth

for a risky "jump," through spaces hung high above "the pendent world." So, perhaps, after all, Chapman was not quite so certain about the well-being of the disembodied spirit, as appeared probable a moment ago ! This much, however, these parallel passages again reveal—that greatly as Chapman exceeds Shakespeare in profundity of thought ; in power of lucid and pictorial expression he toils far behind the master.

Chapman's second act contains, so far as I am aware, no Shakespearean borrowings ; and the third act, while vaguely recalling, here and there, lines and ideas from "Julius Cæsar," "Hamlet," "Richard II," and "Macbeth," shews nothing that one can really set down as deliberate plagiarism ; though it is, perhaps, worth noting that its last two lines, closing one of the noblest and, I think, one of the most original, passages that Chapman ever wrote, echoes, nevertheless, an idea from "Hamlet," iii. 1, there being kinship between Shakespeare's

To thyself be true
And it shall follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man—

and Chapman's

He goes before them and commands them all,
That to himself is a law rational.

But not until we are well into the second of the two plays, "The Tragedy," do the borrowings become really interesting. In ii. 1, for example, it is worth noting that the story of Cupid, playing for a lady's kisses, and losing his arrows to her is from Lyly's song, "Cupid and My Campaspe,"¹ and, at the opening of the fourth act, there are occasional faint suggestions of "Troilus and Cressida" and "King John," but towards the end of the first scene of the fourth act, after a recital of various portents that followed upon Biron's arrival—among them, foreshadowing Ibsen !—

the wild duck
That came into your cabinet—

¹ Dr. Parrott's notes, p. 612.

and

Your goodly horse, Pastrana, which . . . in the
very hour

You left your strength, fell mad, and killed himself

brings us to these significant lines, by Biron—

The matchless Earl of Essex, whom some make
(In their most sure divinings of my death)

A parallel with me in life and fortune,

Had one horse likewise that the very hour

He suffer'd death (being well the night before)

Died in his pasture.

Now those references to the horses, as Dr. Parrott shews, in his notes (p. 615), are certainly taken from Grimestone, but, pondering over that passage, it at once connected itself, in my mind, with v. 6 of “Richard II,” in which also affection for a favourite horse touches the closing hours, not of a Marshal, but of an ex-king, also, like that Marshal, exaltedly extravagant of speech; yet subdued by the authority of a will more powerful than his own—that of Bolingbroke.

GROOM. O how it yearned my heart when I beheld
In London streets, that coronation-day,
When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary,
That horse that thou so often hast
bestrid,

That horse that I so carefully have
dress'd!

K. RICH. Rode he on Barbary? Tell me, gentle
friend,

How went he under him?

GROOM. So proudly as if he disdained the ground.

K. RICH. So proud that Bolingbroke was on his
back!

That jade hath eat bread from my royal
 hand ;
 This hand hath made him proud with
 clapping him.
 Would he not stumble ? would he not
 fall down,
 Since pride must have a fall, and break
 the neck
 Of that proud man that did usurp his
 back ?
 Forgiveness, horse ! why do I rail on
 thee,
 Since thou, created to be awed by man,
 Wast born to bear ? I was not made a
 horse ;
 And yet I bear a burthen like an ass,
 Spurr'd, gall'd, and tired by jauncing
 Bolingbroke.

In this connection, I remembered, further, that—
 according to tradition, at any rate—"Richard II"
 was the play which, to the wrath of the Queen,
 and to their own serious embarrassment the
 Globe actors performed, on the eve of the Essex
 conspiracy ; and that, in v. i of "The Tragedy,"
 Essex is referred to again, in connection with
 Biron—

* The Queen of England

Told me that if the wilful Earl of Essex
 Had used submission, and but ask'd her mercy,
 She would have given it, past resumption.
 She, like a gracious princess, did desire
 To pardon him, even as she pray'd to God,
 He would let down a pardon unto her ;
 He yet was guilty, I am innocent.
 He still refus'd grace, I importune it.

These connections, I concluded, were more than mere coincidence ; and I began to suspect that, in a way precisely analogous to that in which, as we have seen in "*The Revenge of Bussy*," Chapman's pointed reference to the Earl of Oxford is set about with borrowings from "*Hamlet*"—of whom Oxford was the historic original—so here, around references to Essex, he scatters borrowings from "*Richard II*," with a view, possibly, to shewing historic identity between Shakespeare's wilful young king, and the head-strong Earl of Elizabeth's day.

"*Biron's Tragedy*," then, I have little doubt, is, in some sort, a counterblast to "*Richard II*," as a rival conspiracy-play, an opinion which I must now endeavour to make good, though the plagiarisms are, sometimes rather of the manner and spirit, than textually literal with their model.

An interesting example is King Henry's prayer, in iv. 2, which is not, as are so many of the speeches, taken from Grimestone, but—as its dominant motive, of royal responsibility for the lives and well-being of subjects suggests—is based, beyond question, I think, upon the soliloquy and prayer of another King Henry, kneeling also upon French soil—Henry V of England, as set down in Shakespeare's play, iv. 1. Additional proof of this is afforded by a double motive-link with "*Richard II*"—first in Henry V's remorse for his father's (Bolingbroke's) act ; and again in the penitence and contrition ideas, as a means of winning pardon, not from any earthly monarch, but from the King of Kings. These are the lines from "*Henry V*."¹

¹ We have seen Chapman borrowing from Henry V, for "*The Revenge of Bussy*."

272 *SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN*

K. HEN. Not to-day, O Lord,
 O, not to-day, think not upon the fault
 My father made in compassing the
 crown !
 I Richard's body have interred anew ;
 And on it have bestow'd more contrite
 tears
 Than from it issued forced drops of
 blood.
 Five hundred poor I have in yearly pay,
 Who twice a day their wither'd hands
 hold up
 Toward heaven, to pardon blood ; and
 I have built
 Two chantries, where the sad and solemn
 priests
 Sing still for Richard's soul. More will
 I do ;
 Though all that I can do is nothing
 worth,
 Since that my penitence comes after all,
 Imploring pardon.

Throughout the third act of " The Tragedy of Biron," such lines as—

But God who knows kings are not made by art—
 and

And all the blaze of princes is extinct
 harp consistently upon the exalted ideas of king-
 ship, with which " Richard II " teems ; and this
 passage, from v. 2—

VITRY. You see, my lord, 'tis in the golden
 chamber.

BIRON. The golden chamber ? where the great-
 est kings

Have thought them honoured to receive
a place,
And I have had it : am I come to stand
In rank and habit here of men arraign'd ?

though taken, basically, from Grimestone, was, in my judgment, suggested by, and imitated in form from, "Richard II," iii. 3—

NORTH. My lord, in the base court he doth attend.
To speak with you : may it please you
to come down.

K. RICH. Down, down I come, like glistering
Phæthon,
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.
In the base court ? Base court, where
kings grow base,
To come at traitors' calls and do them
grace.
In the base court ? Come down ? Down
court, down king,
For night owls shriek where mounting
larks should sing.

Here Biron and King Richard, it will be noticed, each repeat the name of the place in which they are to be heard ; and there is antithetic correspondence of thought between Shakespeare's " at traitors' calls " and Chapman's " men arraign'd." Further in the same scene, the lines between the Chancellor and Biron—

BIRON. I . . . wish'd myself
Covered with blood.

CHAN. With whose blood ?

BIRON. With mine own.

remind one of Richard II's

With my own tears I wash away my balm—

274 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

while Biron's long speech in the same scene, after the entry of La Fin, beginning, "O all ye virtuous powers," contains line after line recalling, not "Richard II," but—as do so many passages in "The Revenge of Bussy," that preceded the Biron plays—Hamlet-cum-Macbeth. The sources of such lines as these can hardly be doubted.

Powers . . . that have not
put on hellish flesh and
blood.

This extravagant and errant
rogue.

Let not such a Court . . .
sound through it that her
vaunted justice was got in
such an incest.

An image that utter'd these
distinct words. Thou shalt
die, O wicked king; and if
the devil gave him such
power.

A blind side, which by craft
pursued . . . May wrest him
past his angel and his reason

cf. the ghost in "Hamlet," come
from purgatory.

The extravagant and erring
spirit. (*Ham.*, i. i).

GHOST. Let not the royal bed
of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and
damn'd incest.

cf. Hamlet and Macbeth.

cf. Hamlet's ghost-given mis-
sion, disguised under mad-
ness.

Much of this speech harps upon the closet-scene; and the angel-devil motives, that come together in the last two quotations, recall Hamlet's line from that scene (*Ham.*, iii. 4)

Of habits devil, is angel yet in this.

The third scene, of the fifth act, provides four lines by Biron—

I made reply to all that could be said
So eloquently, and with such a charm
Of grave enforcements, that methought I sat,
Like Orpheus casting reins on savage beasts—

which are interesting because, although as Dr. Parrott has observed, they are based upon

Grimestone, embellished by classical borrowings of Chapman's own, they are also, in my judgment, a concealed eulogy, by Chapman, of the exquisite lyrical verse which Shakespeare has put into the mouth of "Richard II," and are comparable with the praise bestowed, in "Bussy D'Ambois," upon the equally lovely passages in the lyric scenes of "Twelfth Night."

Chapman continues, hereabouts, to draw inspiration from the same play ; for this passage—

BIR. You have condemn'd me, my Lord
 Chancellor,
 But God acquits me. He will open lay
 All your close treasons against him, to
 colour
 Treasons laid to his truest images—

is coloured, almost certainly, by the glorious rhetoric of "Richard II," iii. 2, especially by—

RICH. So when this thief, this traitor, Boling-
 broke,
 Who all this while hath revell'd in the
 night,
 Whilst we were wandering with the
 antipodes,
 Shall see us rising in our throne, the east,
 His treasons will sit blushing in his face,
 Not able to endure the sight of day,
 But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.
 Not all the water in the rough rude sea
 Can wash the balm off from an anointed
 king ;

Thenceforth, with the same scene still uppermost in Chapman's mind, the parallels thicken. These lines, aimed by Biron at Henry—

276 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

A sacrifice to valour, impious king !
Which he will needs extinguish with my blood,
Let him beware : justice will fall from heaven.
In the same form I served in that siege,
And by the light of that, he shall discern
What good my ill hath brought him—

again echoes the idea that, “ Heaven still guards
the right ” ; the phrase—

And by the light of that he shall discern—
being probably suggested by—

And darts his light through every guilty hole.

With the entry of Biron, the Bishops, and the
guards, after the conspirator's condemnation, the
analogies with Richard become more close ; and
at once Chapman introduces the up-and-down
motive, so often repeated in Shakespeare's play,
and already used by Chapman, as, for example,
in v. 3—

since clouds are rapt
With these uncertainties, now up, now down.

In this connection, Biron's lines—

I'll break my blood's high billows 'gainst my stars.
Before this hill be shook into a flat,
All France shall feel an earthquake—

are comparable with Richard's, in the deposition
scene (iv. 1)

Now is this golden crown like a deep well
That owes two buckets, filling one another,
The emptier ever dancing in the air,
The other down—

while the Archbishop's lines, addressed to Biron, that immediately follow—

Forego it willingly ; and now resign
Your sensual powers entirely to your soul—
almost repeat Bolingbroke's,

I thought you had been willing to resign.

Biron's next speech, however, is based, for the most part, not upon the deposition, but upon the scene before Berkeley Castle, that Chapman has already made use of. This passage—

And death is nothing ; what can you say more ?
I bring a long globe and a little earth,
Am seated like earth, betwixt both the heavens,
That if I rise, to heaven I rise ; if fall,
I likewise fall to heaven ; what stronger faith
Hath any of your souls ? what say you more ?
Why lose I time in these things ? Talk of know-
ledge,

It serves for inward use : I will not die
Like to a clergyman ; but like the captain
That pray'd on horseback, and with sword in hand,
Threaten'd the sun, commanding it to stand ;
These are but ropes of sand—

is packed with feeling, and motives, taken from those scenes of "Richard II," some of the parallel, or antithetical, ideas being as follows—

death is nothing.
a long globe.
a little earth.
seated like earth.
talk of knowledge.
with sword in hand.

keeps death his court.
a hollow crown.
a little pin.
the antic sits.
talk of graves.
to lift shrewd steel.

besides a repetition of the see-saw motive, in

If I rise, to heaven I rise ; if fall,
I likewise fall to heaven •

278 SHAKESPEARE AND CHAPMAN

Thus echo after echo is continuously making itself heard ; the phrase, " Touch him he falls to ashes," being almost an epitome of the " keeps death his court " lines, while the couplet—

Why should I keep my soul in this dark light,
Whose black beams lighted me to love myself

seems to me to be a distortion of those opulent words, concerning the " ball," that

Fires the proud top of the eastern pines,
And darts his light through every guilty hole
(*R. II.*, iii. 2.)

Continuing, this, by Biron,

Yet more sentences ?
How often will you make me suffer death ?

derives, I think, from " Richard II.," iii. 3,

RICH. What must the king do now ? must he
submit ?

The king shall do it : must he be deposed ?

each passage setting forth the humiliations of the fallen great one, while Biron's—

Read, if it must be, then, and I must talk—

is wholly consonant with the deposition scenes of " Richard II." Here are some further parallels—

HARLEY. They deprived him
of all his estates, honours
and dignities.

BIRON. I never brake the
oath I took to take it.

BIRON. Who sees not that
the valleys of the world
make even right with moun-
tains.

RICHARD. My manors, rents
and revenues I forego.

(*Richard II.*, iv. 1).

RICHARD. God pardon all
oaths that are broke to me.

RICHARD. Two buckets filling
one another,

The emptier ever dancing in
the air,

The other down, unseen, and
full of water.

This last example, in which Chapman has transmuted water into earth, is yet another instance of the see-saw metaphors, common to both plays, and twice more repeated, as follows—

VIDA. My lord, 'tis late ;
wilt please you to go up ?

BIRON. Up ! 'tis a fair pre-
ferment. . . . Come, since
we must.

BIRON. Ay, ay, you talk of
upward still to others, and
downwards look, with head-
long eyes yourselves.

RICHARD. Down, down I come
like glistening Phæthon . . .
For I must nothing be.

RICHARD. Your cares set up
do not pluck my cares down,

Right on, until the end of the play, the parallels continue ; Biron's scornful defiance, upon the scaffold, of the attendant lords, and of the executioner—

I'll strangle half that's here,
And force the rest to kill me—

matching, very closely, the corresponding scene, in Richard's prison, at Pomfret Castle, wherein the deposed king, snatching an axe from one of the servants, kills another with it, before he is struck down by Exton. The entry of the sympathetic groom of the stable—

What my tongue dares not, that my heart shall
say—

with Richard's question asked of him, " What art thou ? " suggested, I suppose, to Chapman the episode of the kindly soldier, with his appreciation of Biron—

Here lay a royal gift, this, this in merit,
Should hoise the other minion into air —

words which, by the way, repeat, almost exactly, Richard's metaphor (iv. 1)—the two buckets, of

which the full one is down, the other "dancing in the air"; and I suspect that Biron's pleasure in the soldier's sympathy—

BIR. This is some poor witness
That my desert might have outweigh'd
my forfeit—

derives from Richard's comment upon the music that made him

a sign of love; and love to Richard
Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

Lastly, the third line from the end of the play, Biron's command to the executioner—

Strike, strike, O strike; fly, fly, commanding soul!
repeats Richard's,

Mount, mount my soul! thy rest is up on high,
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die.

To sum up, then, it seems evident that Chapman, in this play, while borrowing certainly from "Measure for Measure," "Henry V," and "Hamlet," concentrated, in the last act of his tragedy, upon the deposition scenes of Shakespeare's "Richard II."

